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Missouri Christian Lectureship 1884

THE

MISSOURI

CHRISTIAN LECTURES,

DELIVERED AT

COLUMBIA, 1884, AND BROWNSVILLE, 1885.

KANSAS CITY:
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PREFACE.

The Missouri Christian Lectureship, a society for the dissemination of Christian truth, which is our hope of true freedom, to the reading public, sends greeting: With the presentation of this volume we think it fitting to submit a few words of explanation. We said in a former preface, "This is an age of great mental activity. Men are assiduously seeking and kindly entertaining great truths. It is a favorite idea, with the authors and publishers of this volume, that the best thoughts of our finest thinkers should be preserved in a permanent form for future use. This idea has originated, amongst the Disciples of Christ in the State of Missouri, a society called *The Missouri Christian Lectureship*. This society has for its leading objects the investigation, by means of carefully prepared lectures and extemporaneous discussions of critical questions relating to the Bible and Christianity; and the study of such practical subjects as are calculated to lift us up to a higher standard of Christian excellence. The various and persistent attacks made by infidels upon our faith demands the investigation of the critical; while the acknowledged want of a grander development calls loudly for a helpful study of the practical." We are still pursuing these ends. With what degree of success, we hope the readers of this volume shall see. It is freely confessed by those in constant attendance upon our sessions that we can well dispense neither with our books nor the society. To us the benefits of both are apparent. We have evidence that readers of prior volumes were also greatly helped. In this we rejoice, and the fact makes lighter the burdens some of us have borne from the

beginning of our society until now. We wish, dear reader, to submit the question to you, for your decision. Read and rejoice with many others, who thank God for such brave, grand men, as the unselfish authors of the lectures herein contained.

It was our purpose to publish a number of these addresses one year ago, but certain untoward circumstances prevented us; hence, we now present the results of two sessions in one volume.

The following subjects were presented and discussed at Columbia, in July, 1884: "The Philosophy of the Remission of Sins;" "The Fourth Gospel;" "The Resurrection;" "The Relations of Christians to the State;" "Necessity of Biblical Training for Preachers of the Gospel;" "Christian Work in Cities," and "Liberalism and Intolerance." Our lecturers are well-known brethren, the bare mention of whose names should secure careful attention to what they say. They are: C. A. Hedrick, G. W. Longan, John A. Brooks, I. B. Grubbs, D. R. Dungan and M. M. Goode. For further evidence of their merits we refer you to their addresses, being willing to rest our case on that.

The sermon by G. W. Longan on "The New Testament Kingdom," was prepared for the Missouri State Convention, and delivered before that body at Kansas City, Mo., in October, 1884. At the earnest solicitation of the Chairman of our Executive Committee it became the property of the Lectureship, and is now published for the first time.

All the other matter contained in this book was first used at our meeting in Brownsville, Mo., in July, 1885, and subsequently revised, in view of the criticisms. We believe that no relevant truth added by the critics has failed to find a place, in some form, in the addresses as revised.

The subjects and speakers at Brownsville were: "Freedom in Christ," J. A. Lord; "The Scoffer in Prophecy,"

O. S. Reid; "The Spirit of the Age," O. A. Carr; "The Functions of Reason in Matters of Religious Belief," G. W. Longan, and "Reasons why the Bible will Retain Its Hold on Thoughtful Minds," Alex. Procter. Fine oral addresses were made by B. W. Johnson, R. Moffett and Dr. S. S. Laws, which were eminently worthy of a place in this volume, but are withheld by these brethren.

The hope of Christianity for the future cannot be dissociated from an intelligent church membership. The Missouri Christian Lectureship labors that this felicitous end may be realized. My brethren, shall we not, through proper attention to literature of this class, "Take a bond of fate," that we may prove to pale-faced infidelity it lies, when it charges that Christians are ignorant? Above all things else, shall we not strive to be intelligent in matters which are so vital to our most blessed hope? We pause for your answer.

J. H. HUGHES,
Chairman Executive Committee.

PUBLISHERS' PREFACE.

This volume of Lectures is by far the best the Missouri Christian Lectureship has produced. It embraces the lectures for two years, and contains the best thoughts of some of the most gifted preachers in the Christian Church. On this account the volume is entitled to a wide circulation and a thoughtful reading.

Many of the living questions of the day are herein discussed with vigor, candor and acknowledged ability. These lectures are profound enough to command attention from the best thinkers of the age, and simple enough to be comprehended by the common people, a merit which very few books of this kind possess. Men who have a full, rounded knowledge of the subjects they discuss are easily understood by the careful thinker or reader.

This volume will be of real service to the preacher of the Gospel who wants to keep up with the times, and to every thoughtful reader into whose hands it may come.

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THE RESURRECTION.

BY D. R. DUNGAN.

In the discussion of this subject we are necessarily limited to the word of God. The most we can hope to do, is to bring out the full meaning of the divinely authorized speakers and writers relative to this question. Human philosophy will never throw a single ray of light across the line which separates the finite from the infinite. Unaided genius may guess shrewdly and reason plausibly but the facts with which we have to do must be furnished by some one who is not mortal.

In vain we stretch out the neck to peer into the darkness of the valley of death, unless the divine hand shall lift to our enraptured gaze the light of life from the other shore.

Materialists and Spiritualists alike have, in every age, wearied themselves in fruitless attempts to reach the unsearchable and reveal the unknowable. The former have dissected man without finding in him the slightest traces of immortality, and have returned the finding that "death ends all," while the latter, prompted by the common desire to live on, have easily argued themselves into the belief of continued spiritual being. They have liberated the spirit at death and sent it at once into elysian fields, to be fanned with zephyrs from the gardens of the gods,

and to engage in all the pleasures preferred by the philosophers themselves. These musings have been pleasant, but they are the product of desire and are unsupported by any facts known to unilluminated mortals. Men would fain fill themselves with such comforting thoughts, but find no sufficient basis for their hope. "If a man die does he live?" reached beyond all philosophy in the time of Job. And an answer to it is no more to be found by the unaided efforts of human reason now than then.

So much respecting the source from which we may gain knowledge on this subject. To the Bible, and the Bible alone we must look for instruction. Nor can we interpret its statements to suit our fancy or reason. We must use the principles of hermeneutics as unmercifully as if one's theory could be endangered thereby. Doctrines may be plausible, even fascinating, but we can accept nothing on that account.

We must hear the word of the Lord, and that alone, and when its statements have been considered, we must stop. We could soon do this and reach the end of our subject, but for the many theories that have arisen in these latter days respecting this question. It were an easy task to show the scientific atheist that he is compelled every day to accept of things just as unreasonable, or to point the naturalist to the many symbols of our returning to life, in the day and night, in the seasons, in the decay and death, and resumption of life. But, though in all this we might have some sort of triumph, we would

be about as far from any satisfactory settlement of the question as when we began. Hence we take all theories and phases of this question directly to the word of God.

I. *The resurrection of the dead, or literally,* FROM *the dead, is clearly taught in the Scriptures.*

While believers in the inspiration of that volume have different views as to what it is and how it is accomplished, all believe that the doctrine is taught therein. It was the chief topic of the apostles everywhere, and that which made them offensive to the Sadducees. But as no one calls this in question, as all believe in something at least which they call the resurrection, we pass to another proposition.

II. *It is taught that the wicked dead will not rise, nor even any who have not received immortality by faith in Christ.*

Of course these theorists have their Scriptures marked and committed which, to them, establish the doctrine beyond a peradventure. I have not time to notice their arguments, but will simply quote a few passages, which teach the resurrection of all the dead, both of the just and of the unjust.

Matt. 10:14, 15: "And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city."

As the people of Sodom will have to come up again from the dead in order to appear in the judg-

ment, this text is full proof of the resurrection of the wicked dead.

Matt. 12:36: "But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment."

Here are men condemned in the judgment, and hence raised from the dead.

Matt. 13:37-43: "He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; the enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear let him hear."

This shows the separation of the righteous and the wicked at the general judgment, and therefore the resurrection of all, the bad as well as the good.

Matt. 16:27: "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works."

This contains the same thought.

In Matthew 25:14-46, we have two pictures of the

general judgment. In verses 14 to 30, we have the man judged and condemned for not having employed the talent which had been given him. In verses 31 to 46, the Lord is represented as dividing the sheep from the goats. The one class go into eternal life, the other into everlasting punishment. There can be no doubt as to the final reckoning with the whole race here being intended. Hence, beyond all question, the evil as well as the good will be raised.

Luke 14 : 14 : And thou shalt be blest; for they cannot recompense thee; for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just."

The resurrection of the just, implies also the resurrection of the unjust. Indeed, without that thought, there would be no reason in using the word "*just*" in the text.

John 12 : 48 : "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day."

Those men who then lived and rejected Christ, shall be raised and condemned.

In Acts 17 : 30-32, we learn that all men shall be judged in the great day. We know that this cannot be done unless they shall be in the resurrection.

In 2 Cor. 5 : 10, we learn that we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ. This, of course, requires the resurrection of all from the dead.

In 2 Peter 3 : 7, we learn that the wicked are to be sentenced in the day of judgment. This directly opposes the idea that only believers will rise.

In 2 Thess. 1 : 5-10, we are acquainted with the fate of those who have refused obedience to the gospel of Christ. No such sentence as is here indicated would be possible, if there shall be no resurrection of the wicked dead.

In 2 Peter 2 : 9, we are told that God reserves the ungodly unto the day of judgment to be punished. See Matthew 25 : 46.

In Daniel 12 : 1-3, "Many that sleep shall rise." Literally, "the many"—that is, all. Here, too, are the good and the bad; those who shall awake to eternal life, and those who shall come forth "to shame and everlasting contempt." .

In the foregoing passages we have the resurrection of the whole race, hinted in the broadest terms. Indeed without that thought many of these texts would be meaningless. But we now call attention to clear and positive statements on the subject.

In John 5 : 28, 29, we learn that "all that are in the graves shall rise."

From Acts 24 : 15, we are instructed in the doctrine of the Pharisees which Paul also avows, "that there will be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and of the unjust."

1 Cor. 15 : 21, 22: "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."

No one can write a statement that *all* will rise again, if Paul has not done so in this text.

From Mark 12 : 18-27, we have the famous ques-

tion of the Sadducees to Jesus, with his answer thereto. That the case may be clearly before us I will read Acts 23 : 6-8 : "But when Paul perceived that the one part were Sadducees, and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee : of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question. And when he had so said, there arose a dissension between the Pharisees and the Sadducees : and the multitude was divided. For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit : but the Pharisees confess both."

Jesus and Paul were one in belief with the Pharisees respecting this question, and therefore hoped for the resurrection of all.

From Rev. 20 : 12-15, we are assured that the dead, small and great, shall stand before God in the great day of accounts. Death, or the grave, the under world, or the unseen, and the sea, shall give up the dead which are in them, that they may be judged out of the things that are written in the books. Surely it is not necessary for me to say any more on this point. He who will still deny that all the dead will rise, cannot be convinced by the use of Scriptural testimony.

III. *What is the resurrection?*

Three views are presented on the question. First, that the separation of the spirit from the body at death, is all there is of the resurrection. It follows immediately upon the death of the body. In that instant, the spirit stands up again in a new life or rises

from the dead. Others claim that it relates wholly to the body, and that it awaits a given time in the future, when all the elements which went to constitute the body are gathered up, reorganized and reanimated. Still others claim that in addition to the view last presented, the body is rendered spiritual and therefore immortal, and that the spirit which has been in the unseen, returns and re-occupies that body, to dwell therein forever.

Those who hold the first named theory profess to derive much comfort from their faith. They also claim that their view is much more philosophical and reasonable than any other.

Much they have said on this line of argument is very pleasing, but to me it is not satisfactory. Spiritualists have nearly the same views, and usually prove them in about the same way. It will be time enough to note the beauty and harmony of truth, when we shall have found what the Bible teaches on the subject. Our preferences and philosophies must have nothing to do in determining the facts respecting it. *What saith the Scriptures?* must be our watchword and the key to a correct understanding of the whole matter.

This theory maintains that the resurrection is an accomplished fact with all who have died. Hence, that there cannot be any such thing as a future resurrection at which all the dead shall rise. I do not think that this idea has any foundation in the word of God, and I will now give a few reasons for regarding it as I do.

1. *We have already seen that the Scriptures teach a general resurrection, at which time all that have died shall come forth, both the just and the unjust.* If there be a difference, then, those who sleep in Jesus shall rise first, and afterward those who are not his. In addition to what we have quoted on another proposition, two texts must suffice.

1 Thess. 4:16: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first."

1 Cor. 15:22, 23: "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are his at his coming."

Whatever may be affirmed concerning the wicked dead, two things are undeniably taught respecting the righteous dead in these two passages: First, they will all rise at one time; and second, that one time will be when the Lord comes again. It is not necessary to say that this directly antagonizes this new doctrine. No one can fail to see this. If Paul is correct in his teaching, then this philosophy of which we speak is an error.

2. *The legitimate teachings of this doctrine is in opposition to the idea of a future, general judgment.* With few exceptions, those who deny the resurrection of the body, deny also that there will be any one time at which all men will be judged. The thought is, that when a man dies he goes at once into his everlasting state. Indeed, it is plainly affirmed that

since Christ rose from the dead, even the unseen has been abolished. Hence there is no place left for those who have died, but heaven or hell. This removes all purpose, if not the possibility, of a future, general judgment. The following Scriptures affirm the judgment to be after the resurrection of the dead and at a given time: Daniel 12:2; John 5;28, 29; Acts 3:21; Romans 2:12-16; 1 Cor. 15:22, 23; 2 Tim. 4:1; 1 Peter 4:5; Rev. 20:12-15; Acts 17:31. The language of these texts is too plain to be misunderstood. And both objections to the new gospel are maintained by them—viz: a general resurrection and a general judgment. And both of them are in direct antagonism to the spirit resurrection theory.

3. *The word sleep is used to indicate the state of death.* But in the light of this new theology there is nothing in the state of death which may be thus compared. When the man has died he is done with the body forever. He is never to be regarded afterward as having any connection with it or interest in it. And yet of the body only can the word "sleep" be applied after death. If the spirit leaves the body never to return to it again, and goes away into the full realization of all that has been promised, there is no state of death nor anything in connection with the departed that may be denominated sleep. If we are to grant that this word must have reference to the spirit in the first Thessalonian letter, it should be remembered that it is only so used because the spirit and the body are both considered as necessary to the

glorified man. But if the body had nothing to do in this, the word sleep would not have been applied at all.

4. *If this theory be true, there is no intermediate state.* It is not enough to answer this by some reference to Catholic purgatory. Whatever may be the extravagancies of that people, the only question with which we have to do is, Do the Scriptures teach that there is an intermediate state? If they do, that is the end of all controversy on the subject. If they do not, then this new theory may be correct. While the Savior was on earth he gave the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, in which there is a picture of the unseen world, between death and the resurrection, and the condition in which the righteous and the wicked pass their time. The rich man had five brothers yet living in the world when he was in hades, and the only way that was proposed to warn them was by some one rising from the dead for that purpose.

But if it be claimed that when Christ rose from the dead, then was the unseen abolished, that since then no such place exists, I affirm that the Scriptures continue to teach the fact that such a place is yet in being. In Jude 6 we read: "And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day."

In 2 Peter 2 : 4, we have the same thought repeated. And then in the 9th verse we read: "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations,

and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished."

In Hebrews 11 : 39, 40, Paul says, speaking of the ancient worthies: "And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise; God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect."

In Revelation 20 : 12-15, we are taught that at the great day of the Lord, the sea and death and hades shall give up all their possessions, and after that death and *hades* shall be destroyed.

But let this suffice. There is no need of repeating proof on this proposition. It is simply certain that there is an intermediate place for spirits between the time of death and the judgment, or the statements of the Bible are absolutely misleading.

5. *Christ was the first one who rose from the dead.* So many times this is stated in one way or another, that it would seem like regarding my hearers as skeptics, to cite those passages in detail. But if a *standing-up* again from the dead, immediately after death, is the resurrection, then from Abel down to the day on which Jesus was crucified, men had been rising from the dead! Not only so but all men had risen from the dead. Jesus, in this case, was not the first to rise by about four thousand years. It is no answer to this to say that there was an intermediate state from the creation up to the time that Christ rose from the dead, but that since that there is no such place. It is not a question as to where the spirit went after the separation from the body. Its separa-

tion was then as eternal as now, and its independence was then as absolute as now. Hence, if that separation and continued conscious being is resurrection now, it was resurrection then. It is therefore certain that, if this theory be true, the Scriptures which state that Christ was the first born from the dead cannot be true. So far then as I can see, we are compelled to reject the Bible or this philosophy.

6. *Christ rose from the dead on the first day of the week, being the third day after he was crucified.* This is the testimony of all the Scriptures on this subject. And yet this new philosophy would complete his resurrection immediately after his death on the cross. Even on the morning of the first day of the week the apostles did not know the Scriptures that he must rise again. It was when they saw Jesus and ate and drank with him, heard him speak and handled him with their hands, that they knew that he was risen again from the dead. If Jesus had not come forth out of the tomb, if his body had not risen and left the sepulcher of Joseph, no man would have thought of claiming that he had risen. Whatever else was true in the resurrection of the Savior, it was everywhere claimed that he had come forth out of the grave, and this fact was the prominent feature of his resurrection. His coming forth from the grave is nowhere given as proof that he had risen, but as being the fact itself. Take that fact out, and there would have been no resurrection in the case.

Thus it seems that this new theology is contradicted on almost every page of the word of God. I

would dismiss the idea without further attention, but for the fact that a few texts of Scripture have been pressed into its support, and deference to its friends demands that I shall pay them some attention.

1 Cor. 15 : 35-38 : "But some man will say : How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come? Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die ; and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat or of some other grain ; but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body."

It is simply wonderful how many and what contradictory theories can be sustained by one Scripture. The materialist proves by this text that when man dies he goes into the grave all together ; body, soul and spirit, all share alike ; all must die alike and become as though they had not been ; all must decompose as certainly and as entirely as the grain of wheat decomposes in order to the production of a new stock. The spirit-resurrectionist goes to the same passage with equal confidence of success. To him, it is as clear as it can be that Paul teaches that the body which is sown never rises. It falls into the earth and a new spiritual being emanates therefrom. This is not the body that existed before, but the body which God gives.

These theorists succeed in compelling Paul to testify on a subject which was not before his mind ; hence ordinary cleverness enables them both to succeed. I am unable to see any reference to a spiritual

resurrection in the passage. That new stock and new ear are just as material as the old grain could be. The manifestation is a new materiality. And if the former was of the earth, earthy, the latter is no less so. This is not all, nor is it the most fatal objection to the interpretation mentioned. If that grain represents the body and not the spirit, then it teaches that all there is of the new life or of the spirit, springs out of the body, and that, too, as it decomposes. This they do not believe. They hold that there is a spirit in man now that survives the death of the body, separates from it and lives on. Hence there is no way in which this theory can receive any support by any fair analysis of this text. The mistake is in supposing that Paul was aiming to illustrate the manner of the resurrection. He is not answering a question honestly asked. This is seen in his retort: "Thou fool." No man deserves such treatment for any honest inquiry concerning the resurrection. Nor would Paul be justified in so denominating any one for not knowing how the dead are raised up. This is the case fairly stated: Paul was reasoning with those who denied the resurrection in toto, and who made their philosophy the chief grounds of their objection. Because they could not see how the body, after having been wasted in the earth, could again be collected and raised, they therefore denied that there would or could be any such a thing. To this objection Paul retorts by calling the objector a fool. He then shows him that, guided by his philosophy, he ought never to sow another grain of wheat,

since the whole process of reproduction was equally beyond his philosophy. Neither Jesus nor any apostle ever undertook to describe or illustrate the process of the resurrection. The Master announced it as a fact based on the power of God and the promise of his word. The nearest that Paul could approach it was to say, "It shall be raised a spiritual body." John said: "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is."—1 John 3: 2.

Sometimes the language of Jesus to the thief, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise," has been pressed into service. They claim first, that paradise means heaven, and second, that as the thief was with Jesus that day in heaven, and as it would be unreasonable to expect him to come back here to the earth to hunt up his body, therefore his body would never rise.

This interpretation is subject to the following objections: (1) It makes the thief rise before his Lord, for we have already assured ourselves that Jesus did not rise till the third morning after his crucifixion. (2) Or, if Jesus had to rise from the dead that day in order to go into paradise, then he rose twice; first, on the day of his death, and second, the third day thereafter. (3) Not only did Christ rise on the day of his death, but what is still stranger, no man ever knew of it for many centuries afterward. No writer in the divine volume ever gave the slightest hint that he knew anything of Jesus having risen

from the dead on the day he died. (4) The meaning given to paradise is an assumed one. In itself, the word means a garden, a place of delight. This is not all; the Pharisees (and the Sadducees never used the word) employed it to indicate the abode of the spirits of the blessed, between death and the resurrection. It was in that sense that the thief would understand him, and there is no reason to suppose that he gave to the word any unusual meaning.

The parable of the rich man and Lazarus is appealed to for support. Their eternal state was fixed, and therefore they must have been in the resurrection. Not only so, but while they were in the resurrection state, the rich man had five brothers yet living in this world. This argument has the following elements of weakness: (1) The scene is laid on a time previous and therefore teaches a resurrection before the resurrection of Christ. The philosophers do not claim this for it is in plain contradiction of the New Testament teaching on the subject. (2) No one has ever claimed that the condition in the intermediate state is to be changed by the resurrection. Aside from Catholicism and Restorationism, there has been no theory that has proposed to save the incorrigibly wicked out of hades. Hence the argument that the scene is in the resurrection state is not supported by the unchangeableness of the parties. (3) The only way then proposed by which the five brothers of the rich man should be warned, was for Lazarus to go to them from the dead, or as Abraham is made to state it, "though one rose from the dead." But if

these were in the resurrection there would have been no reason in speaking of the resurrection in order to warn these men.

It has been urged that Moses and Elijah must have been in the resurrection, and therefore that they did not wait till the final great day for this purpose. This, of course, puts them in the resurrection before Jesus which we know cannot be true.

The discourse of Jesus to the Sadducees (Luke 20 : 27-38) has been used as proof that men rise from the dead when they die. Prominence is especially given to verses 37 and 38: "Now that the dead are raised, even Moses showed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. For he is not the God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto him."

The argument is usually made from the continued life of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and the fact announced that "all live unto him," in connection with the statement that "the dead are raised." Hence the conclusion that these patriarchs and all others who have died have already risen again. But this again contradicts the Scripture teaching that Christ was the first to come forth from the dead. To put Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the resurrection when the Scriptures pointedly deny the statement, is not safe exegesis. These philosophers as well as the materialists miss the scope of the passage. The Sadducees denied any possible resurrection. They claimed that all of man went to the grave together;

that he was wholly material, and that when his body had returned to the earth as it was, there would be nothing to raise from the dead. See Acts 23:6-8. Jesus answers them on the resurrection, by showing that the basis of their logic was a mistake; that though man's body will perish in the tomb, yet he continues to live, that he has not lost his identity and therefore that he will be raised from the dead.

Another argument is made from 1 Cor. 15:50: "Now this, I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption."

Surely nothing but absolute and premeditated poverty of proof could cause any one to quote this verse in support of this new philosophy. No one that I know of who believes in the resurrection of the body, supposes that it will go into heaven with the gross materialism which characterizes it here; but that whether the saints shall have slept or shall yet remain alive, they must be changed before they can be caught up to meet the Lord in the air.

The word *inherit*, twice used in the passage, does not mean inhabit, to exist in, to live in, but to heir; to possess by right; to hold by lot or by the law of descent. Paul's argument is that we have to gain everything through Christ; that while we have natural life through Adam, our eternal peace must be through Christ the only Savior of men. Unless the text is pressed out of measure, it contains nothing in favor of the spirit resurrection theory.

The ablest argument that I have ever seen from

these philosophers, and the one on which they rely most, is ridicule. "The resurrection of the body is unphilosophical and absurd." Or some one has uttered some extreme statement respecting it and therefore the doctrine must be false. I know of nothing that may not be laughed at. A small amount of genius could accomplish a great deal if ridicule was only real argument. Like the Sadducees of old, they can ask, "How are the dead raised up?" and because no one is able to tell just how the Lord is going to gather up the dust and re-animate it with new life, they assume that there can be no such thing as the resurrection of the body. I cannot argue from the standpoint of human philosophy; the finite mind is incompetent to deal with this question. And yet if it were a question of philosophy, the resurrection of the body would seem as likely to be true as that the spirit shall go on to eternity without it. They tell us that their theory is beautiful, and that it is very full of comfort to them. This may be, but it is not argument, nor Scriptural proof. It is not a question of preferences, of likes or of dislikes; it is one that can only be settled by the word of God. And as that word does not depose in favor of the spirit resurrection theory, we dismiss it as being unsustained.

IV. *The resurrection of the body.*

We have already seen something as to what the resurrection is, along with much concerning what it is not. But we now come to attend to those Scrip-

tures which are supposed to teach the coming forth of man's body out of the grave.

1. *The Old Testament believers expected that the body would rise from the dead.* A common view on that point may be seen in Herod's opinion of Christ (Matt. 14:1, 2): "At that time Herod the tetrarch heard of the fame of Jesus, and said unto his servants, This is John the Baptist; he is risen from the dead; and therefore mighty works do show forth themselves in him."

This is not the Pythagorean idea of a spirit coming back again and assuming another form. This would require infancy and growth before manhood. Having himself beheaded John, he thought the Lord had raised him from the dead; hence, that this was the very John who had been imprisoned and whom he had beheaded.

We have already seen that the Sadducees denied the resurrection and that the Pharisees believed it, and that in their minds it related to the coming up of the body from the dead, and that even in a world to come the distinction of sex would not be destroyed. This was in the mind of the Sadducee when he opposed the objection of polyandry to the resurrection, nor did the Pharisee know how to meet it. It is safe to say that all who spoke of the rising from the dead referred to the body.

Here are a few representative texts in the Old Testament which give a fair view of the faith which was common among that people.

Psalm 17:15: "As for me, I will behold thy face

in righteousness: I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness."

Isaiah 25:8: "He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces."

This was a hope of something yet to be accomplished. It was not yet realized in Isaiah's time nor yet in Paul's time, for that apostle quotes the prophet to indicate the resurrection for which he was still hoping.—1 Cor. 15:54.

When Ezekiel prophesied of the return of the Jews from Babylon, he gave the vision of the valley of dry bones (chap. 37:1-14). The scene is that of the resurrection of the dead; the purpose, to show that God's people would return again to their own land. The re-animation of these bones and the breathing into them the breath of life again shows what they expected in that matter.

Daniel 12:2: "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."

Whatever may be the purpose of this language, it is undeniably taken from the resurrection of the human body. It is only in that sense that any portion of the race has slept in the dust of the earth, from which they will awake again.

Hosea 13:14: "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death; O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction; repentance shall be hid from mine eyes."

While it was left for Christ to teach the certainty of the resurrection, it appears from the dim light of the Old Testament vision that God's people had long expected the day of triumph when their bodies would come up again from the dead.

In the 11th chapter of John, we find that to be the faith of Martha, the sister of Lazarus: "Jesus said unto her, Thy brother shall rise again. Martha said unto him, I know he shall rise again at the resurrection at the last day."

She probably had her faith from the promises of God in the Old Testament. If not from that source, then from the teaching of the Master himself. Lazarus had not risen when he died. No such a thought was entertained either by Martha or the Master.

Now if the resurrection was not what she thought it to be, it is passing strange that Jesus did not correct her mistake. But he never reproved any one for expecting that the body would rise.

2. *Paul was a believer in the resurrection of the body.* In Acts 24: 15, he says: "And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there will be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and of the unjust."

In this he announces that his faith was simply that of the Pharisees on this question. Again in Acts 23: 6-8, we read: "But when Paul perceived that the one part were Sadducees and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee: of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question.

And when he had so said, there arose a dissension between the Pharisees and the Sadducees: and the multitude was divided. For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel nor spirit: but the Pharisees confess both."

The Sadducees did not deny that there is a spirit in man, but they denied that it could survive death; that it went with the body into the grave, and there all was ended. Of course denying that the spirit of man could exist independently of the body, consistency demanded that they should deny the existence of angels also, for these are separate spirits. There was, then, two questions, first, would man's spirit continue in a state of consciousness after death? and second, would there be a resurrection of the dead? From this it is plain that the continued existence of the spirit after death was one thing, and the resurrection of the dead was another. From this it is clear that in the mind of Paul, the resurrection included the raising up of the body, and re-animating it again with new life.

3. *The use of the word resurrection in the English New Testament, and the original anastasis in the Greek, indicates the re-animation of the body.* I know that very scholarly men have told us that the word means simply a standing up in another state of being. I have great respect for the scholarship and candor of some of these men. And yet I feel compelled to dissent from their view, from the use of that word in the New Testament.

1. In twelve occurrences, the word relates to

the difference between the Pharisees and the Sadducees, which, as we have seen, referred to the resurrection of the body out of the grave.

2. In John 11:25, the Savior says: "I am the resurrection and the life." Christ being the author of life after death was an added thought to that of the resurrection. Hence, if the word *anastasis* did not refer to the raising up of the body, it had no meaning at all.

3. Ten times the word *anastasis* refers to the resurrection of Christ from the dead, which, as we have already seen, had respect to his body coming out of the tomb of Joseph of Arimathæa.

4. In Acts 17:18-32, we have an account of Paul's preaching to the Athenians, Jesus and the resurrection; and they thought he was a setter forth of strange gods. What was there in the word *anastasis* that was new to them? They were accustomed to it, for their philosophers used it. And if he had used it in the sense they did, he would not have been called a babbler for it. Many of them did not believe that death ends all; at least they had frequently heard of a standing up again in another life. But Paul's use of the word carried an additional thought. And that was new to them.

5. Hebrews 11:35: "Women received their dead raised to life again." Here our word occurs which is elsewhere translated resurrection. These women received their dead by resurrection. Evidently, however, the word has about the same meaning here that it has in the case of Lazarus. The

body is raised and re-animated but not immortalized; it is as subject to death as ever. It serves, however, to show the use they made of the word.

6. The word is so surrounded that the attentive reader cannot fail to see that it implies the raising of the body. I will give a passage or two to indicate my thought in the matter.

Acts 17: 30-32: "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent: because he hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him up again from the dead. And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked; and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter."

Paul taught the resurrection of the dead by the resurrection of Christ, whom God had raised up. Thus it is certain that Paul taught the raising up of the body.

The redemption of the saint is not full till the body is alive again from the dead, and made into the likeness of the body of Christ. It is this for which we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven, groaning within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to-wit: "the redemption of our body."

We might continue this examination with great profit, but it is not proper for us to do so now. I am sure that any candid, attentive reader will find clear

proof or the resurrection of the body in the circumstances in which the word *anastasis* is used.

7. *Jesus taught the resurrection of the body literally.* John 5 : 28, 29 : "Marvel not at this : for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth ; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life ; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."

Some have said that this means nothing more than a spiritual resurrection in the sense of making alive in the service of God. This is not correct for many reasons : (1) "They shall come forth out of the graves," is never employed for that purpose. (2) The power by which they should come forth was absolute ; Jesus will utter his voice and they shall come forth. As he afterward said to Lazarus, Come forth, so he will call to all them that sleep in the dust of the ground, and they shall hear and obey. But when men are made alive spiritually, only moral power is used. (3) Some of these shall come forth unto damnation. But if it were a spiritual resurrection, a coming forth into the service of God, they would all have life as the result ; not one of them would come forth unto damnation.

8. In 1 Cor. 6 : 14, Paul teaches the resurrection of the body : "And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power." Thus as he raised up Christ, so will he at last raise up us. This was not something that was passing, but it was to come. God *had* raised up the body of

Jesus from the tomb, and he *will* also gather up our dust at last, and glorify us with him.

9. *Paul declares that it is this vile body that is to be changed and brought alive from the dead.* Phil. 3:20, 21: "For our citizenship is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."

It is not this vile body that is to be dismissed and laid aside, shuffled off and left forever, but it is to be changed and fashioned like unto the glorious body of Christ. On this passage Dr. Macknight has the following just remark:

"Who will fashion the body of our humiliation, in order that it may become of a like form with the body of his glory? The body of our humiliation is our body humbled into a state of mortality by the sin of the first man; and it is contrasted with the body of Christ's glory, or the glorious incorruptible body in which he now lives as Savior and universal Lord. Like to this body of the Savior, of which an image was given in his transfiguration, the bodies of those who now have their conversation for obtaining heaven, shall be new made when Christ returns. So that here, as in Romans 8:23, the redemption of the body from corruption by a glorious resurrection, is represented as the especial privilege of the righteous."

A few things may be said to profit respecting this text.

(1) Christ's body was raised from a state of death and made immortal. See also Romans 6:9, 10.

(2) He ascended into heaven and was made our king.

(3) In this kingdom of the heavens we have our citizenship.

(4) From thence he will come again and receive us to himself. See John 14:1, 2.

(5) At that second coming he will change our vile body and fashion it like to his glorious, immortal, or glorified body.

10. *A plain picture of the resurrection and the judgment is found in Rev 20:12, 13:* "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the books were opened, and another book was opened, which is the book of life, and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them; and they were judged every man according to his works."

Already we have had a picture given us by the Savior in John 5:28, 29, very similar to this. They both teach that the dead, all the dead, shall rise from the grave and that immediately afterward there will be a general judgment.

11. *As a closing argument of the resurrection of the human body I cite the 15th chapter of 1 Corinthians:*

Par. 1, verses 1-6: The gospel which Paul preached contained the facts that Christ died for us, that he was buried, and that he rose for our justification on the third day, according to the Scriptures.

Par. 2, verses 7-19: The apostles were witnesses of his resurrection. As he rose from the new tomb of Joseph, so will he raise us; and those were false teachers who denied the resurrection of the dead.

Par. 3, verses 20-23: As Christ rose from the dead so shall we.

Par. 4, verses 24-26: He will put down all enemies; the last one will be death,

Par. 5, verses 27, 28; After having put down all enemies, even death, he will then deliver up the kingdom to the Father.

Par. 6, verses 29-31: Their baptism indicated their faith in the resurrection of the Lord and the hope that they, too, would also arise.

Par. 7, verses 32-34: They should therefore deport themselves in harmony with such a faith and such a hope.

Par. 8, verses 35-41: Some foolish man would object to the resurrection of the dead, because he could not understand it, thus basing his opposition to the promises of God on his own ignorance.

Par. 9, verses 42-44: So is the resurrection: this corruptible body is sown, but it is raised in incorruption.

Par. 10, verses 45-52: As by Adam the first, all men must die, so by Adam the second, all who have been redeemed by him shall be raised from the dead

and glorified like their Master. There will be saints, too, found at that time who have not died, and these shall be changed in a moment and prepared for heaven.

Par. 11, verses 53-57: Christ's final victory will be in the resurrection and glorification of all his saints.

Par. 12, verse 58: Seeing that this struggle shall end in victory, let us abound in the work of the Lord, knowing that our labor in the Lord shall not be in vain.

In this chapter Paul teaches that it is the same body that goes into the grave which comes up again. There is no living man who is competent to write a statement that will declare the resurrection of the human body, if Paul has not done so in this chapter.

As to the philosophy of the resurrection, I have none. I am wholly dependent upon divine utterances for any intelligence whatever respecting the subject. If you ask me how God can gather up the scattered dust of his people and give to each his own body, I frankly confess that I do not know. All my expectation in the matter is based on what God has said.

V. Additional facts in the Resurrection.

We have now seen that all the dead will rise, whether good or bad. We have seen also that the human body will rise; that this natural, carnal, corruptible body will come forth out of the grave, and that it will then be changed and fashioned like to the

glorious body of the Lord Jesus. And we now come to inquire if there are further facts concerning this, revealed for our hope and consolation, in the word of God?

We have one illustration, and one only, from which we shall be able to gain instruction here. We must take the resurrection of Christ and learn from it.

Luke 24: 1-7: "Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulcher bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them. And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulcher. And they entered in and found not the body of the Lord Jesus. And it came to pass as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold two men stood by them in shining garments; and as they were afraid, and bowed their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen again; remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee, saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again."

Romans 6: 9: "Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him."

All that was mortal in that body has been removed and immortality has taken its place. Other bodies had been brought back again into life, but they were still mortal, death still had dominion over them. What further changes, if any, took place in the body

of Jesus as he passed into eternal glory, we do not know. One thing is certain, in the coming forth of Jesus from the tomb, the word resurrection has its full meaning. On that evening when he appeared to the disciples for the first time after his burial, he was as fully in the resurrection as now. Hence, whatever changes took place afterward, they are no part of the resurrection. Let us hear now from another witness:

Acts 2:25-31: "For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover my flesh also shall rest in hope: because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou hast made known to me the ways of life: thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance. Men and brethren, let me freely speak to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulcher is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; he seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption."

Now we know that when Jesus died on the cross his soul went into hades, but in the resurrection it was united again with his body, it being immortalized and made a fit temple in which the spiritual man might reside forever. This, then, is the completed

redemption which God has provided for those who will accept of it, so that Satan shall have the victory in nothing, only as men are disposed to yield themselves to his service. From the contamination and weakness of sin, the spirit of man is freed by the atonement, through faith in Christ and obedience to his will. But God has provided that everything that was lost shall be regained. Hence the spirit is not only to be liberated from the strong hold of sin, but the body also shall be delivered from bondage and introduced into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. By reason of sin having been introduced into the world, death has been entailed upon the whole race. Deformity and frailty seem to be almost a common lot. Here we are lame and halt and blind; encompassed with infirmity and filled with pain. But this mortal shall be swallowed up of life; eternal vigor will come by the resurrection body.

Does some one ask, What shall be the resurrection body of the wicked? I have only to say that I do not know. I only know that they shall rise from the dead; that they shall come forth to shame and everlasting contempt; that with these bodies they shall go away into everlasting punishment, where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched. But the glory and blessedness of the resurrection are all for the saints, and therefore no description has been given of the manner in which the wicked dead are raised.

It is possible to ask many questions for which no answer can be found in the Bible. Yet everything

necessary to duty or hope has been clearly revealed. But for hope, we should fail. The stoutest heart is appalled at the thought of going down into the valley and giving the body to be food for worms, where ages on ages may pass in the rayless night of the grave. But when we listen to the encouraging words of victory, our hearts are made to hope. The Captain of our salvation has been made perfect through suffering. He wrestled with death and snatched victory from the right hand of the enemy; he entered the iron gates of death and broke the massive bars asunder; he has scaled the glorious heights and planted the banner of everlasting liberty on the embattlements of heaven, from whence he shouts to all intelligences, "I have the keys of death and the under world." As he speaks, the veil spread over the future is taken away, and we are permitted to see the whole number of the children of God in paradise, waiting only for the days of trial on earth to be ended; till the last enemy shall be conquered, when all the blood-cleansed shall be gathered into the presence of the Father of lights, to celebrate the praises of him who has saved us from our sins and ransomed us from the power of the grave. Though we shall be smitten down by the king of terrors, and the earth shall grow dark and fade away from our sight, by faith in the Christ we can penetrate the portals of the tomb, we can dissipate its darkness and discover the brightness and joy of an eternal day.

"Here rest my soul,
No farther seek to go;
What God has revealed,
Is quite enough to know."

THE NEW TESTAMENT KINGDOM OF GOD

BY G. W. LONGAN.

"My kingdom is not of this world; if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews." John 18; 36.

"And I also say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hades shall not prevail against it." Matt. 16: 18.

When our blessed Lord was arraigned as a culprit before the bar of Pontius Pilate, he quietly submitted to be questioned concerning his claims. "Art thou," said Pilate, "the king of the Jews?" Jesus knowing well that he had been prompted by the malignants of the Jewish Hierarchy, replied: "Do you ask this yourself, or did others tell it you of me?" Pilate said, "Am I a Jew? your own nation have delivered you to me. What have you done?" Jesus answered: "My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, then would my disciples fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews." John, 18: 33-36. To these marvelous words, I ask special attention to-night. We cannot ponder them too reverently. Again: In the neighborhood of Cæsarea Philippi, Jesus asked his disciples, "Who do men say that I, the Son of man, am?" Receiving prompt answer, according to the facts, he continued to question: "Who say ye that I am?" Simon Peter, always impulsive, often weak, answered for himself

and his brethren, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus responded with a blessing upon Peter, and then added these memorable words: "I say unto thee, thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hades shall not prevail against it." Matt. 16:16-18. Upon these passages I am about to build a discourse. My theme is the Genius of the New Testament Kingdom of God. I begin at once with the words of our Lord's reply to Pilate, as reported to us by the Evangelist John: "My kingdom is not of this world." I have said that these are words of great significance. But this was to express but tamely my conception of their meaning. I have indeed no words at my command that are altogether adequate. Only the great Masters of human thought are able to compress whole systems into a single phrase. And looked at for the moment, simply as a human teacher, with the divine gift of human genius moving him with its lofty inspirations, Jesus must still be classed not only among the great Masters of thought, but assigned to the very highest place in that class. Into this brief phrase, he has crowded the contents of a volume. "My kingdom is not of this world." Let us try for a few moments to see what is here. Religion had always heretofore been a thing of the state. In heathen nations, kings had played upon the religious instincts, beliefs, and superstitions of the populace to promote their own selfish and ambitious ends. Still the state was never without a religion duly recognized and, in some sense, provided for, and regulated, by law. It was as much

a thing of the state as any branch of administrative care. Every nation had its gods. When one nation conquered another, it sought, for the most part, to assimilate it to itself as well in religious rites and service, as in civil institutions and administrative forms. Rome was generous, and gave to her conquered peoples the right to worship their own divinities, enrolling their distinctive cults among the *religiones licitas* of the empire. But always and every where religion was a thing of state; a matter for state prescription and regulation. So it had been among the Jews. From the beginning at Sinai, nay long before Sinai, in the old tribal days, religion had been interwoven with the whole secular life of Israel. At Sinai it was incorporated into the body of the Mosaic legislation, and henceforth became an integral element in the national and social life of the theocratic people. Church and state—if church can rightly be predicated of Judaism—were one and inseparable. At all events religion was national. Jehovah was Israel's God, Israel was Jehovah's people. The relation was not a mere natural relation arising out of Jehovah's rights as "the god of the land," but an ethical relation grounded in a solemn covenant, according to which Israel accepted Jehovah's statutes of righteousness and agreed to observe and do them through all generations. This is the essential and fundamental conception of the theocracy of Israel as distinguished from the national religions which were contemporary with it. But the thing to be borne in mind, as essential to our present line of inquiry, is this: that in every

case, religion was an affair of state. It was interwoven with the whole governmental structure, and with the entire political and social life of the people.

Now these words of Jesus look to the inauguration of a new and wholly different order of things. Religion and the state are to be absolutely divorced. A kingdom in the world, but not of the world, is to be the distinguishing characteristic of this new "*ordo seclorum*." The world had never heard of anything like this before. No law-giver, no prophet, had ever propounded such a conception. It was absolutely unique. Daniel indeed had prophesied of a kingdom to be set up by the God of heaven; a kingdom that should stand forever. But Daniel gave no outline of the plan of this kingdom. He gave no word that could help any one to differentiate it from the existing order in Israel. No Jew standing at Daniel's point of view, ever conceived of such a kingdom. This honor belongs solely to Jesus of Nazareth. Standing here, "in the ends of the ages," he alone distinctly announces the programme of a purely spiritual kingdom. He gave Pilate to understand that he was about to become the founder of such a kingdom. These words, as they have come ringing through the centuries, admit us to the confidence of the Redeemer. They disclose to us the idea that lay in his heart from the beginning. With this ideal before us, we can understand the meaning both of his life and his death. Every word, every deed, is absolutely consistent with the purpose thus revealed. The separation of the secular and spiritual spheres, the

founding of a kingdom, which should exist within the territorial boundaries of all other kingdoms, and yet collide at no point with the rightful jurisdiction of any prince or potentate on earth—this was the marvelous conception of the Divine Founder of the New Testament kingdom of God. The Old Testament kingdom of God, as I have said, stood on another plane entirely. Moses never dreamed of anything like this. The "universalism," as it has been called, of the Jewish prophets fell far short of it. They saw indeed that Jehovah was more than the national God of Israel, that he was, as the Father of human souls, the rightful sovereign of all the nations. Their perception of the universality of ethical principles logically led them to the universality of Jehovah's dominion. But their highest dreams of Jehovah's rule over all the nations were cast in the mould of the Old Testament order of things. Through Israel, all the peoples were ultimately to be won to the worship of Jehovah, but the essential forms of the theocracy were to remain. Circumcision, the law, the priesthood, were to abide forever. Jerusalem was still to be the legal center and metropolis of all true worship. That "the middle wall of partition" was to be "broken down," that the law of commandments contained in ordinances was to be "abolished," no Jew—neither Moses, nor Isaiah, nor Daniel—had ever dreamed. Only Jesus perceived that a universal religion must disengage itself from all national and race limitations. Only he, of all the world, saw clearly the

boundary that separates the secular from the spiritual. To him alone, therefore, was the conception of a kingdom founded on the soul's relations to Almighty God, (a kingdom dealing only with that large realm of human life included in these relations,) in any wise a possibility of thought. A kingdom seeking to obtain sway over all peoples must have to do only with those things which are common to all. Turning away, therefore, from everything local and transitory, it must be built on that only which is universal and eternal. Such is the New Testament kingdom of God. It separates the spiritual sphere entirely from the temporal. In its organized forms it seeks no direct control over policies of state. The office-bearers of the church have, as such, no civil authority. The civil magistrate has nothing to do with questions of faith or church life. These spheres are eternally distinct. There can be no collision of authority so long as this distinction is reciprocally maintained. Upon this high plane the New Testament kingdom of God was projected and launched upon its world-historical course. No apostle, no leader of the first age, ever thought of a state church. To one who had been with Jesus, such an amalgam of things incongruous was an impossible conception. The churches founded by the apostles willingly paid taxes to the emperor, asking, in return, only the free exercise of the God-given rights and franchises of the soul. To dictate in purely secular administration they aspired not. The question of later times as to the relation of the temporal and

spiritual, which is superior to the other, gave them no trouble. From their point of view, the jurisdiction of each was supreme in its own realm. And so the grand work of evangelization went forward. The emperors indeed went out of their way to persecute the churches. This was no fault of the latter. We understand it now.

Here were great rival faiths battling for the supremacy. It was a life and death struggle. It is true that the conflict was essentially one of ideas. But the dearest and deepest convictions in the souls of men had met and antagonized each other. There was no compromise possible. One or the other must give way. The emperors adhered to the old pagan faiths, at least to the rites and forms of the old worship. Their personal sympathy was with those who adhered to the old order. In such a conflict of convictions on the great overmastering questions of human life, where no compromise is to be thought of, it is impossible that the baser passions shall be always kept in abeyance. In localities where the debate waxed hottest, it was inevitable that disturbances should sometimes occur. That the pagan opponents of the gospel should appeal to the civil rulers, was not unnatural. That governors of provinces, and even emperors, should not be proof against such appeals, is not now to be thought a strange thing. And so it turned out that the excellent Pliny was perplexed, and even good emperors, like the Antonines, sullied their otherwise fair fame by persecuting the saints. Yet the persecution was

without real cause, and the Christians suffered for conscience's sake. They were the victims of ignorance and prejudice on the part of the masses, and of thoughtlessness, or malevolence, on the part of rulers urged on by partisan clamor. During this long life and death contest between the gospel and paganism, down to the time of Constantine, the churches remained true to Christ's fundamental principle announced in our text. They neither expected nor desired, so far as history avouches, any alliance with the civil power. But it was not to be always so. Long ago, Paul had predicted a dire apostasy. "The day of the Lord will not be," so he wrote to the Thessalonians, "except the falling away come first." The mystery of iniquity was at work even in his time. He saw already the signs which foretokened its full development, and uttered words of warning in the ears of his brethren. I do not pretend to know definitely and exhaustively what the apostle meant by his "Man of Sin." I know, however, that this man of sin was to be the outcome of an apostasy. I know, too, that when Constantine took the church in his imperial arms, when the religion of the humble Nazarene was made the religion of Rome, Christ's fundamental principle was utterly and openly abandoned. I know that "the falling away" had, to all intents and purposes, then come. It might increase in its proportions. That it should do so, was in the nature of such a movement. That it did long continue to so increase, in breadth and power, is my solemn conviction. But from the day of Constantine

it was here. The one great departure then effected would draw after it a thousand others. I am not now concerned to complete this delineation. The history of "the dark ages" is the history of "the falling away" foretold by Paul. The mediæval Papacy with its greed of gold and lust of power, its sham of apostolical succession, and its lying miracles, seeking to dictate the policy of kings, and insisting that heresy shall be exterminated by the sword, is, at best, only a sad, sickening counterfeit of the church founded by the Lord Jesus, at the cost of his own most precious blood. Nor has Protestantism effected a full restoration. Under God a great change has been wrought, but the good work must still go on. "My kingdom is not of this world," must be thundered in the ears of men, until state-church monstrosities shall disappear from Christendom—till, indeed, the divine constitution shall be restored, at all points, to its rightful supremacy. Let us turn now to the passage in Matthew: "On this rock, I will build my church; and the gates of hades shall not prevail against it." Notice, Christ here says church, not kingdom. These are not absolutely identical expressions in the New Testament. Still, in the present case, they are nearly enough so for the purposes of our argument. It is impossible to escape the conclusion that our Lord had in his mind. Hear the prophecy of Daniel regarding the kingdom. Daniel says: "And in the days of these kings, shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be

left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and shall stand forever." Dan. 2:44. Daniel's kingdom is to stand forever. Our Lord says, that against his church, the gates of hades shall not prevail. The idea of divine foundation and perpetuity is the same in both cases. This practically identifies the church and kingdom in our passages from Matthew and John. But our Lord says, "Upon this rock." What rock? Peter had just made his ever memorable confession, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." The scope of the context, and the nature of the case, alike determine our Lord's reference in the metaphor of the "rock." Any clear analysis of the context must show that by "this rock" Christ could only mean the divine fact which Peter had confessed. This, I take it, is too clear to need argument now. Besides, it is apparent that Christ's Messiahship and Divinity are in the nature of a foundation both to his church and religion. This is the bottom reality in the whole structure of the faith. It implies everything, includes everything, and on it everything depends. This is too plain to justify me in consuming more time upon it. The "Rock," therefore, is our Lord's Messiahship and Divinity as "The Son of God." This, as I said a moment ago, is the bottom reality upon which Christ's church rests. It is the foundation of Christ's religion. Nothing in the gospel is true, if this is not true; nothing is false, if this is not false. This, therefore, is clearly the foundation rock upon which our Lord said he was about to build his

church. I have said that "church" and "kingdom" are not, in the New Testament, absolutely identical expressions; and yet, that, for the purpose of the present inquiry, they may be so considered. The church may be regarded as constituting, through its local organizations, the working form of the kingdom. This makes the two practically identical. But the church, in the comprehensive sense of our Lord's promise in the text, is not an organized ecclesiasticism, but rather a fellowship, a brotherhood in Christ, consisting of all the true Christians on earth. The perpetuity promised in the text, is, therefore, only the perpetual succession of the generations of saved men and women. Organization in New Testament times was only congregational, local. Yet the members of all the local organizations were taught by the apostles to regard themselves as belonging to one body, to the one fellowship of the redeemed.

Now into this one fellowship, or church, all entered by the same way. That the great fact of Peter's confession might become practically, as well as ideally, the foundation of the church, the Lord placed it at the entrance-way, as the test of fitness for admission to all who would enter. Only such as came confessing, as Peter had confessed, their faith in Jesus, as the Messiah, the Son of God, could enter, through baptism, into the divine fold. This was no arbitrary, or mechanical arrangement. If this fact were to be made the actual foundation of the church, it could be accomplished in no other way. Every member of the body must accept, and

confess, the same faith in order to stand on the same foundation. This seems plain enough. And so it came to pass in primitive times, that none were received to baptism but those who confessed Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God. Neither was any other profession, or confession of doctrine, or experience, required. Till the last inspired apostle closed his eyes in death, no other confession of faith than this was ever required of any soul seeking admission to the society of the redeemed. No one competent to speak on such questions will deny this statement. This explains, brethren, our practice in the effort we are making to restore the original order of things. *It was so in the beginning.* It was so in our Lord's own announcement, and so in all the churches of the saints throughout the apostolic period. The creed of the primitive church, it has been, therefore, sometimes said, contained but the single article—"Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God." Certainly this was the common faith, which all received and confessed, and without which none could be admitted into the fellowship of the divine household. This is undeniable.

It has been the fashion to distinguish between "saving faith" and certain forms, or "kinds," of faith that do not save. In the doctrinal confusion which everywhere prevails it is natural that some such distinction should be sought for. A number of very respectable denominations agree in regarding each other as evangelical; and the tendency of late has seemed to be towards a larger liberality in

defining the boundaries of this "evangelical" fold. This is, doubtless, as it should be, but this is not the point just now in my mind. There is, it must be clear, some common ground of belief—however vaguely grasped in thought—at the bottom of this evangelical fellowship. Generally and indefinitely speaking, we might call it agreement in "the essential doctrines of the gospel." But what are these essential doctrines? Perhaps no two theologians would fully agree in a statement intended to embody them. Of course, evangelical agreement must include all the things which must be believed in order to salvation. It may include more, but cannot include less. Our brethren, of all confessions accepted as evangelical, perceive that there must be a common faith-basis at the ground of the evangelical status. What they do not perceive clearly, is that this common basis is not the "doctrines" in which they may, or may not agree, but the common faith in a personal Messiah, without which there is no gospel salvation. Alexander Campbell once said: "God never saved a man for believing a theory"—doctrine—"nor damned a man for not believing one." The point has never been better put by any one since. It is not easy to exaggerate its importance. Salvation depends upon receiving Christ; not any doctrines about him, much less doctrines about other things; for instance, "depravity," "divine decrees," "predestination," and similar points in speculative theology. To receive Christ, is to accept him in his divine personality, as the Son of God. This faith in

the personal Messiah is the faith that saves. This is the true evangelical faith. This is the common faith which ought to determine evangelical status among us, as it determines the saving status with Almighty God.

This faith that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, is the belief of a fact, not a doctrine. The difference is very great. A fact (Latin *factum*) has been defined as "a thing done." Let me enlarge this definition. *Whatever is—exists—is a fact.* This is the way we constantly use it; as, for instance, when we speak of the facts of nature, the facts of history, the facts of life. The distinction is that between the simple reality of existence and any theory, which may be advanced in explanation of this reality. This is a very plain distinction. Its importance in our present line of inquiry is easily perceived. To believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, is to receive him as he is; according to divine reality, as regards both his offices and his person. Of this there can be no doubt among Christians. I do not want to say ugly things of any sincere man's attempts to state theologically his conception of the person of our Lord, or of his pre-mundane, or post-mundane, relations to Jehovah. The speculations on these questions, now historically famous, were perhaps inevitable under the great divine law of development, the proofs of which every thoughtful man sees all about him, whithersoever he turns his eyes. But after all that has been thought, all that has been said, we can surely see now the wisdom of God in the

formula which originally expressed the faith of the whole church. The Nicene Bishops may have been right; indeed, if I understand them, I confess I think that, for essential substance, they were right. But how different their way and style from God's way. God says, "This is the Christ; this is the Son of God. Build on this rock. This foundation is as sure as the pillars of my own throne. Build on this, and what you build shall stand forever." The Nicene Bishops say: "This is the only begotten Son of God, begotten of his Father (before all worlds): (God of God,) Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father." This is orthodoxy. Build on this, maintain this, and you shall be accounted orthodox. Refuse to build on this, and you shall be counted heretics, and cast out of the pale of the Catholic church. The Nicene formula may be true to the divine reality, notwithstanding its barbarous scholasticism of statement. I am not disposed to take issue, as I have said, with what seems to be its essential substance. But how different is the divine formula of the primitive church! So simple, so all-embracing, so grand! Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. This is what Jehovah wishes men to believe concerning the Nazarene. Objectively, this is "the faith once delivered to the saints." Subjectively, the faith which saves is the personal trust which the belief that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, inspires in every one who really so believes. This one saving faith was, then, the foundation, both

ideally and actually, of Christ's church. "Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid: Jesus the Christ." Whatever is less than this, is too little; whatever is more than this, is supererogatory, human, dangerous to the peace and welfare of God's spiritual Zion. All these things, in the light of God's word, we do most sacredly hold.

From the premises now before us, we conclude most certainly, that whoever believes with his whole heart that Jesus is the Christ, God's Son, and from the heart seeks to keep reverently all the commandments of Jesus, as found in God's holy word, is a Christian, a child of God, and heir of immortal life. As a Christian, as a child of God, every such obedient believer on earth is entitled to the hearty Christian sympathy and fellowship of every other child of God, irrespective of differences in the wide field of speculative theology. His faith is the one faith to which God has given most conspicuous approval, and his life is the obedient life of faith without which there is no promise of salvation. The conditions of salvation in the gospel, broadly stated, are two: faith and the life of faith. In the primitive church, the conditions of Christian fellowship were just the same. The kingdom of God, the church of Christ, was a brotherhood of such believers, consociated in mutual fellowship on this broad, holy ground. To believe in Jesus and keep his commandments, was everything in the first age of the church. The distinctions of scholastic theology were unknown, and the divisions to which they have given rise were alike unknown.

The church was one, upon the one faith that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and the one life of practical righteousness which is the logical and scriptural outcome and expression of that faith.

But it may be said, that any attempt to separate Christianity from its distinguishing doctrines must prove utterly impracticable; that a conception of Christianity so separated, even if it were possible, would not indeed be Christianity at all, but a widely different, and wholly valueless thing; that this attempted distinction between the "common faith" that Jesus is the Christ, God's only Son, and the formulas in which the church, through the ages, has sought to give precision and definiteness to that faith, is only a new and more plausible movement in that impossible direction. I recognize this statement as a possible and plausible one from intelligent and candid men, who have been trained, after the manner of Protestant scholasticism, to attach great importance to doctrinal subtleties. I am not aware that this objection has been really urged against this special plea, but I can see readily enough that it might be. It becomes us, therefore, to give it respectful consideration. The difficulties of a candid mind are never to be thrust rudely aside.

What do we mean, then, when we propose to eschew dogmatic speculations, and build upon the one faith that is common to all Christians, irrespective of theological differences? Is the supposition to be entertained for a moment that a true faith in Jesus Christ can be isolated utterly, so as to exist in the

soul, and manifest itself in the life, without involving any associated or correlated beliefs, other than the single belief confessed at baptism? Of course no sensible man dreams of any such thing. The belief that Jesus of Nazareth is the only begotten Son of God is not like an isolated mountain peak, rising from the plane and towering upward, without any attachments, or connections with surrounding ranges or systems. It is rather like some peerless mountain monarch rising far above surrounding peaks, but immovably built into the range of which it is only the loftiest elevation, and, through that range, connected with the whole system of mountains, of which the range itself is an integral part. No; the belief that Jesus is the Christ must not be separated, cannot be separated, from other correlated beliefs, so as to lie isolated and bare in the soul. It has its presuppositions and implications, from which it cannot be severed, even in thought. It was not because of its narrowness, but its comprehensiveness, not on account of its exclusiveness, but its inclusiveness, that Jesus declared it to be the Rock on which his church should rest secure through all the ages. That Jesus is the Christ, God's divine Son, is a faith so large that it includes every other Christian truth. The man who holds this faith may fail to apprehend, or may even misapprehend, some very valuable features in the systematic construction of Christian doctrine; but his failure, or his mistake, will root back in his understanding, not in his heart; it will be the result of a blunder in Christian dialectics, not a token, or

outcropping, of an unsound faith. Yes; the man who believes in his heart of hearts that Jesus is the Christ, may be trusted to do his own thinking, in the light of God's holy word. He may make mistakes; but who has not? He is not, like the pope of Rome, infallible; neither, my brother, are you, or the whole church to which you, or he, may belong. Let him think; let him, if he must, make mistakes. I know no way to avoid mistakes altogether. The fact is, as I suppose, that our divine Master knew we would make mistakes here and there, and so he did not make a faultless body of dogmatics a condition of salvation; neither did he intrust the church with the privilege of doing for the individual, in this respect, what the individual was incapable of doing for himself. He selected out of the wide field of Christian truth a single, all-involving fact, and made that fact the foundation of his church, the creed to be everywhere confessed, the passport evermore into the society of the redeemed. The faith that Jesus is the Christ gives validity and authority to each integral part of the gospel. No intelligent man can doubt this. And so it is, that the believer in Christ is logically committed to the whole gospel, in its widest range of presuppositions and implications.

But the particular truths implied in the faith in Christ are, to a considerable extent, truths of biblical interpretation; and biblical interpretation is not, like mathematics, an exact science. There are no hermeneutical rules which a man can bring to the Bible, as one brings a tape line to the measurement of a

given surface, and be sure that he will obtain infallible results. There are questions of lexicography, and questions of syntax; there are literal passages, and passages figurative; there are the strange, unearthly symbols of prophecy, and the lofty, but often bewildering, tropes of oriental poetry—all to be carefully and reverently studied by the sacred exegete. Then, when lexical and grammatical considerations fail, as they often do, to yield an absolutely certain result, the interpreter must have recourse to the analogy of faith. But the analogy of faith is by no means a constant factor, for to scarcely any two theologians is the general concept of the faith absolutely identical. Besides, the interpreter needs to know critically, if it be possible to him, the original language in which the Scriptures were written. Nay, he needs to know much outside of all these things: such as general history, and the most assured results of human science. It is impossible for any thoughtful man, in our times, not to see that rays of light are now coming in from many directions, which materially assist a thoughtful student in his efforts to obtain a satisfying knowledge of the Holy Book. Beyond all these things, one needs an acquaintance with the literatures of ancient peoples, especially of oriental peoples—their peculiar modes of thought, and ways of expressing their thoughts. The man who studies the Bible as he would study the constitution of the United States, or the statutes of Missouri, will never understand it; indeed, ought never to understand it. It is a wonderfully miscellaneous book, and the

genius of its parts, as well as the general purpose of the whole, must not be lost sight of by any one who would obtain even a fairly satisfactory understanding of its multifarious contents. All this is said simply to show that in questions of minute exegesis, where microscopical forms of truth—such as are many of the subtleties of the theologians—are involved, there is large space for honest difference. In addition to these things there is the natural aptitude, the mental equipoise, the impartiality, the critical acumen, of the interpreter himself. Take two men equally learned, equally devout, and there shall still be, in many cases, no sort of equality in their exegetical ability. Natural aptitude is the first and most indispensable qualification in an interpreter. Then, the pole-star of the biblical interpreter must always be truth. The supreme question—what is truth? must be first in his heart, and first in his thought. Astronomers in adjusting the results of a number of independent, but contemporaneous, observations of the transit of a planet—say of Venus across the sun's disk—are accustomed to allow for what is known among them as the "personal equation." Natural ability, thoroughness of scientific training, skill in the use of instruments—each counts in the scale of comparative qualifications. The final estimates will lean most on the work of those observers whose personal qualifications are known to be the most trustworthy. So the biblical interpreter has his personal equation. He may be a scholar, but a theological partisan. He may be critically acute, but inclined to

wander into fanciful hypotheses. He may love truth, yet be wanting in the general scientific and historical knowledge without which the best results are not attainable. All these things, and many more, count in biblical interpretation. And so it comes to pass that in the domain of systematic theology, the name of the theories is "legion." He who expects uniformity here is a simpleton, or a bigot. And yet, denominationalism is built on this notion of uniformity—at least in essentials. The faith, the orthodox faith, must not be imperiled. *We* are conservators of the faith. A number of "articles," more or less, and the faith will be safe. So the work has gone on from the beginning, nearly. It is time to call a halt. The process of disintegration has proceeded quite far enough. If the "solidarity of the peoples" means anything in the great world-movements of our times, the "solidarity" of the believers in a common Christianity means, to a reverent and large-hearted disciple of Jesus, infinitely more. But denominationalism must prevail forever, unless Christians can be brought to see—what ought never for a moment to have been unseen—that the unity of the faith in Christ—the unity of the church in that faith—may consist perfectly with large differences in the theology of individuals, yet never, I say never, with the existence of those aggregations and segregations known as denominational churches. I desire to be modest, but in saying this, I am conscious of a strength born from above, the strength of God's holy, everlasting truth.

So it appears, when we carefully examine the ground, that the belief that Jesus is the Christ, God's only begotten Son, when joined with a devout, Christ-like life, can be depended on to carry with it the belief of all necessary Christian truth.

It will not quiet all theological discussion—that is not desirable—but it will conserve the real essentials of the gospel. It may not hold one to the doctrine of "total depravity," but it is certain to hold him to the doctrine of human sinfulness, and to the guilt and condemnation of all men as sinners; it may not conserve the doctrine of "predestination" and the "decrees" in the orthodox Westminster form, but it will carry with it, in every case, a firm belief in the "eternal purpose of Jehovah, which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord," and in the divine "predestination" of every child of God "to be conformed to the image" of his adorable Redeemer; it may not bind him to any particular philosophy of Christ's sacrificial death—the substitution philosophy, the governmental philosophy, the moral influence philosophy—but it will most assuredly hold him to the belief that "he died for our sins, according to the Scriptures." Yes; the belief that Jesus is the Christ, in virtue of its logical relations and inclusions, may be trusted to carry with it all essential Christian truth. We do not undertake to separate Christianity from its really distinguishing doctrines; but, by falling back upon the divine foundation, we obtain a single statement, which includes and conserves everything that ought to be held essential to the salvation

of the soul, or the fellowship of God's people. Than this, I devoutly believe, there is no higher or holier ground. I have shown that the one confession of faith which was common to all the churches—local churches I mean, not denominations, of which there were none—all the churches of the first age, is wonderfully comprehensive in its character. Whoever confesses this faith, accepts all its manifold inclusions. He is bound by it to all Christian truth as far as knowable to him, and in his heart he reverently owns this obligation. But the purely theological domain, we have seen, is one of much uncertainty. The best interpreters, the most profound thinkers, while holding fast the common faith are notably wide apart in theological opinions. Here the Christian is a free man in the Lord. Not free that he may believe anything to which his wayward heart may incline him, but free to reach, as best he can, with all the lights before him, the truth which best meets the demands of his own understanding, and the conscious needs of his own yearning heart. Free in the sense that no one may impose upon him any churchly dogma as a condition of salvation, or a term of fellowship in the kingdom of Jesus. In this field of mere doctrine, none may judge him, or despise him, on pain of incurring his Lord's displeasure. But no man can always decide certainly as to what is essential Christian truth, to which the believer is clearly bound by the meaning of his confession, and what are those other forms of truth to which the right of difference attaches. No hard-and-fast lines are pos-

sible here. Of many things, it may be affirmed definitely that they belong to this, or that category. Of many other things we shall not be able to speak certainly. In this region of thought, honest differences are sure to arise, even among men equally wise, and equally sound in the common faith. Here arises a necessity for forbearance and mutual trust. Here, dear brethren, is large scope for the exercise of that "love which suffereth long and is kind: which thinketh no evil and is not easily provoked: which beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, and never faileth."

We may not always be able to see clearly whether this or that particular thing is in rigid keeping with the analogy of faith and the authoritative precedents of Scripture. Differences will inevitably occur along these lines. In all such cases we should move with great caution. The law of love is supreme, but the law of Christian freedom must not be subverted. I may be willing to concede anything as a mere matter of personal preference, but I will concede nothing that takes away my liberty in Christ. I stand here immovable as adamant. I maintain my right to the hearty fellowship of my brethren, in the full exercise of whatever franchises the Christian birthright implies. To concede away these franchises, is to be untrue to Christ. To demand that which encroaches on these franchises, is to depart from apostolic ground, and stand with those who have introduced all manner of sect-strife into the kingdom of Jesus. Let us, my brethren, make no mistake at this point.

In cases where the Lord intrusts a work to his church, and gives no direction as to methods, we have, confessedly, a field for the exercise of Christian discretion. Such is the command to disciple the nations. As to the command, there is no doubt. As to the methods of operation and co-operation, not a word is said. What then shall we do? Sit still? Disregard the "marching orders" of our divine Captain? Wait till we have agreed upon some basis of work to which every crank and self-confident opinionist in the ranks gives his assent? God forbid. For, in that case, God's work, solemnly committed to his people, will never be done. In the light of all scriptural teaching, we must devise ways and means for work, and go boldly forward, according to the Lord's commandment. If any man wants to quarrel, let him have the quarrel all to himself. It will do no good to parley with him. In the end, the true friends of Jesus will rally with those who are doing his work. And so, whatever questions arise as to mooted points in theology, or concerning the necessary expedients for the accomplishment of church work, let us bear in mind that none is infallible in interpretation, that where Scripture is not explicit, and the case is to be decided by analogies and the supposed bearing of general principles, none must be permitted to set up his own conclusions as a standard by which other consciences are to be tried. Whoever steadfastly holds to the faith in Jesus, and constantly strives to honor him in his daily life, is not to be adjudged a heretic because, perchance, God has given him a

wider understanding of divine things than some of his brethren. It is, doubtless, possible to be too latitudinarian on the question of fellowship, but the danger is practically greater on the other side. Bigoted opinionism, culminating in exclusive orthodoxies, has been the bane of Christendom in all the ages.

From the elevation which we have now reached, we are able to see that the great question for Protestants in the future, is this fundamental one of the basis of fellowship and unity in the kingdom of God. Shall Protestants be content with an ideal "concord in discord," or shall they seek a real unity such as that for which our divine Redeemer uttered his most fervent prayer? Is it true, as Dr. Schaff has recently said, that "The evil lies, not in denominationalism and confessionalism, but sectarianism; not in variety, but in exclusiveness; that denominationalism grows out of the diversity of divine gifts, and may co-exist with true catholicity and large-hearted charity?" Is this the truth, the whole truth, in the case? A thousand times, no. It is a plausible statement, but not sound. There may be, doubtless there are, numerous individual instances of a catholic spirit and large-hearted charity inside the denominations, but the inevitable tendency of denominationalism is to bigoted exclusiveness, and the destruction of all true catholicity. The whole history of denominationalism attests this fact. The simple nature of the case should be enough to satisfy a thoughtful man. While denominations exist, and human nature remains what

it is, even in the best men, there must be, as there always have been, denominational ambitions, rivalries, jealousies, envyings and strife. Dr. Schaff, and all true and grand men like him, should see that, according to the genius of the New Testament kingdom of God, there is indeed provision made for "Diversity in Unity," but that it is the diversity of individual beliefs in one divine fold, or church, and not the diversity of denominations in a discordant, and always more or less belligerent, Christendom. Dr. Schaff would, doubtless, admit that there is a bond of fellowship uniting all true Christians in one brotherhood, which is far higher and holier than any denominational bond. What is to hinder such change of the denominational bond as will make it coincide definitely and precisely with the higher Christian bond? Obviously, nothing but this same "selfishness" and "sectarianism," which the learned Doctor so much deplores. But such a change, if universally accepted, would be the death of denominationalism. For when the bond of denominational fellowship becomes coincident with that of Christian fellowship, the existence of the former, as distinct from the latter, is no longer possible. It is clear, then, that the very existence of denominationalism depends upon the maintenance of a confessional bond of fellowship, which is entirely different from the divinely ordained bond of Christian unity and brotherhood. If the excellent Dr. Schaff, and all the other Doctors, will only open their eyes, this fact will stand clearly

revealed to them. Nothing in the universe is more certain.

And now, dear brethren, permit me to say, in conclusion, that the true vantage-ground of our position, as a religious people, becomes very apparent in the light of this discussion, of the genius of the New Testament Kingdom of God. With us, the bond of fellowship in the church is, and always has been, identical—in theory at least—with the gospel conditions of Christian unity and brotherhood. If, at any time, it has been practically otherwise, the fault has been with our imperfect administration, and not with our great underlying principle. The fiction of church fellowship, as resting on a different basis from Christian fellowship, we utterly discard as without foundation in Scripture. Whoever believes in, and reverently obeys, the Lord Jesus, is my brother; and I shall never belong to any church that would refuse him its hearty fellowship. This is the one pre-eminent feature of our movement which shall be our "joy and crown," when Jesus comes. Let us contend earnestly, yet lovingly, for all Christian truth, as God gives us to know that truth, but let this grand conception of the genius of Christ's kingdom be ever kept in the foreground, as the most distinguishing and differential attribute of the great plea which we are making, in the name of the Lord, before the men of this generation. Brethren, I may never address you again in our State Convention. I want to bear testimony now, that the interest I feel in this movement to which I have given the best energies of my

life—as regards all its essential characteristics—only grows stronger and deeper as the years glide away. I would have you, if any word of mine has weight with you, plead for every Christian truth with a zeal precisely commensurate with its relative importance in the whole system of truth. Have no hobbies. Exaggerate the importance of nothing; neglect nothing of real value. But this truly fundamental and far-reaching conception of the genius of Christ's kingdom, as I have sought to present it to you to-night, I beg you to urge with such power and persistency, that men cannot but listen to you. Show them that denominationalism, in its fundamental basis, is not only unscriptural, but anti-scriptural; that the basis of church fellowship, and Christian fellowship, according to the Scriptures, is one; that whatsoever is more than this, or other than this, cometh of evil, and is necessarily schismatic; that the prayer of our Lord can never be answered, until all his disciples shall gather again on this holy, apostolic, Christian ground. And now may the blessing of the Lord God attend us in all our efforts to achieve this, our grandest aim. Amen.

LIBERALISM AND INTOLERANCE.

BY M. M. GOODE.

"For ye brethren, were called for freedom; only use not your freedom for an occasion to the flesh, but through love be servants one of another." Gal. 5:13. Revised Version.

Liberty is a word perfectly in accord with the thought and spirit of our age, and it is that in Christianity to which we are called. It is not the purpose of Christianity to arbitrarially hamper, restrict and tie men up. On the contrary it calls to liberty. Christianity came forth into our world from a living soul; not from a mythical, but from a real person. As the Reformation of sixteenth century was urged on by Luther, as liberty was hurled forward, not by abstractions, but by heroes, so Christianity has for its founder and force a person. The gospel is not a human invention, or discovery, or the outgrowth of the thought and experience of a growing world; it is a revelation from the Infinite Mind; it is cast upon the high plane of divine omniscience; it is stamped with divine authority, and like its Author, is the same yesterday, to-day and forever. In the sphere of practicalness the New Testament contains at least three sets of ideas:

I. *The specific detailed facts and commands of Christ.*

II. *Broad general laws and principles which are of universal application under all conditions of society.*

III. *Ideas of the local and temporary incidents, customs, peculiarities and prejudices of the day in which it was composed.*

The facts and commands of Christ, also the general laws and principles of the New Testament are immutable. But, in the department of principles, Christianity may be full of lessons, or empty of them, all depending upon its conformity to and activity in the application of these principles. Local needs, customs, peculiarities and prejudices of individuals and of society are constantly changing and methods of action must have a corresponding change. The law of loving each other and helping each other holds good for all places and all time, but the service which expresses this principle may change with changing needs and customs. In the New Testament we see love expressing itself in washing the feet of friends, but when the Bible journeyed away from the land of the sandal and the bare-foot, love left the old duty behind, but carried forward the law of service changing the form of expression to meet new and different requirements. Thus the New Testament not only carries within itself the facts and commands of Christ, but general laws and principles, and then local actions, and customs, and in its wandering away from Palestine many an old custom was left behind. Only by this method can you read and

understand the New Testament. Let the epistles of Paul serve as an illustration of this thought. He stood in the three relations mentioned:

1. To the facts and commands of Christ.

2. To the general laws and principles of Christianity. Of these essential things he said: "But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you let him be anathema." Gal. 1:8.

3. The customs, peculiarities and prejudices of his time. What he taught as essential to salvation and fellowship in the church would be liable to no change. Nor would the general laws and principles of Christianity; but methods of action and service, born of these principles, may be as changeful as changing human customs and needs. Here is a large field for the exercise of human judgment and a broad Christian liberty and tolerance of differences of opinion. In regard to the customs, peculiarities and prejudices of his time, Paul said: "Let every man be fully assured in his own mind." Rom. 14:5. "It makes no difference one way or another."

Two ideas create the Christian world, namely—a life controlling faith in Christ, and a wide love for humanity. The true test of Christian fellowship, as set forth in the New Testament, is faith in Jesus as the Son of God, and obedience to his commands. In the time of the apostles nothing beyond this was required of any one in order to acceptance into fellowship with Christians. The creed of the primitive church had but one article in it, namely: "Thou art

the Christ the Son of the living God." Matt. 16 : 16. This is the foundation of apostles and prophets which God has laid in Zion.

When we speak of faith in Christ more is meant than the acceptance of articles of belief, or any human standard of orthodoxy of ancient or modern times. We mean the intelligent acceptance of Christ as the incarnation of Deity, as the only Lord of the conscience and the rightful sovereign of the universe. Faith, in order to save, must rest on a saving object. There is no power in doctrines and opinions and speculations to save any one. Fellowship is not sought in harmony of opinions and theories, but in the one faith in Christ Jesus. For two things a man may forfeit Christian fellowship : 1. For denying the faith concerning Christ ; and 2. For refusing to walk in his commandments. This we believe is the ground which was occupied by the primitive church.

To introduce any other conditions is to introduce new and false tests of fellowship and to violate the law of Christian forbearance and love. Seeing that Christian faith is believing on Christ, it follows that if the whole category of speculative theology were destroyed, Christianity would remain untouched. A man may be an avowed unbeliever in whole volumes of theoretical theology, and at the same time a consistent believer in Jesus. Within the whole boundary of speculative theology belief and unbelief is of little importance, and wholly without moral value. What the world needs is a faith that can see the living Christ and can discover far forward of these days the

horizon of triumph which the souls shall raise, who, through faith in the divine Redeemer, have escaped from sin and death. Christ himself is the soul and center, the life and power of the gospel. Everything is suspended upon Him; the veracity of God and the hope of the world.

Faith in the personal Christ is the one faith which, like a golden cincture, is yet to clasp and bind all Christians in the holy bonds of fraternal love. It will finally disengage itself from old opinions and speculations which have so long obscured its glory and become the unifying and cementing power of all Christian hearts. The matter of becoming a Christian is not a transaction between the sinner and the church, but between the sinner and the Savior. The object is to bring the individual into loyalty to Christ, and this done, all else will follow in regular order and normal development. The foundation of the apostolic church, the basis of association and fellowship, was laid in one great cardinal truth, namely, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

Thus, while Christianity has a definite form of faith and commands, it also has a large field of judgment and opinion, where the broadest liberty should be allowed consistent with Christian peace and character, and in which the greatest charity and forbearance should be exercised.

In regard to non-essentials Paul teaches that no man must judge his brother, to his own Master he stands or falls; and no man must use this liberty so as to become an occasion of injury to his brethren.

Everything must be held in abeyance before this essential faith in Christ. Outside of the plain precepts of the gospel all must acknowledge the liberty of all and be careful to waive their own right or liberty rather than be an occasion of offense to others and to please others rather than themselves. Questions which pertain to the domain of expediency should be dealt with in charity, and not acrimoniously and dogmatically. Here charity and liberty must be the rule of action. As respects expedients, methods of working, and all other questions that affect the peace, harmony, or efficiency of the church in doing the work entrusted to its care, but concerning which no specifications are given, we can afford to defer to each other's judgment in the most generous spirit, and in matters outside the New Testament teaching which do not imperil character or the peace of the church, let each one be governed by his own judgment.

In many things it may be necessary for us to yield our preferences for the general good. Paul conformed to this principle when he said, rather than cause his brother to stumble, "I will eat no flesh forevermore, that I make not my brother to stumble." 1 Cor. 8 : 13. This is the extent of Christian liberty. That liberty which sacrifices the truth, the authority of Christ, and insists upon a form of free thought that endangers character and the moral life of society is a spurious freedom. To surrender Christ and his commands is to surrender Christianity itself. We propose no tolerance here; we cannot make the sur-

render and attempt to follow the uncertain light of human reason over the bogs and swamps of life, and on into the deepening shadows of death's strange night. Here sleepless vigilance and uncompromising faithfulness is the price of true Christian liberty.

When Paul says, "Let every man be fully assured in his own mind," he is not speaking of the essentials of Christianity, but of the customs, opinions, prejudices and peculiarities of his time. It is in this way we understand his remarks and advice about feasts, and Sabbath days, and marriage, and Christian women being veiled in the worshipful assemblies of the church. His words were wise and full of duty for the hour, but not as giving details for the far future. A rude opposition to settled notions of the proper and improper in matters indifferent is a temporary wrong. All the customs around Paul and the near coming persecutions demanded the words which he wrote. The duty of one epoch may become the weakness or servility of the next. It would have been a defect of Paul's mission had he not given those around him the best advice for their hour. The divineness of his words lie not in their detailed, perfect application to coming ages, but in their thrilling worth to the souls into which they were first poured. Each age comes with its own needs, customs and peculiarities, and so Paul mingles with changeless facts, commands and principles, lessons for the hour; a temporary form of ethics which added to the value of the apostle's errand among men. There is a large field of Christian thought and action where duty

must be seen as a continent over which seasons come and go in their vicissitudes.

A spring comes, in which new obligations grow, and then a winter succeeds, in which many die and are buried. The advancing centuries give us an evolution of duty. He who goes to the New Testament for each particular work of his own time, will wrong the author of Revelation; for he did not map out all the works of life, but only fundamental ideas. The Samaritan who found the wounded man by the Jericho road, carried not in his hand a law of specifications for such a case, but he carried in his bosom principles which included all forms of human need, and which passed and executed in a moment a new law. A change of obligation often comes in our world and we must carry in our hearts principles, which, expressed in new form of action, will meet the new demand. While principles do not grow, duties may enlarge, and the church must hasten to add to its decalogue those new obligations which are born out of new relations, new demands, new struggles and advancing thought. Before each mind and heart lies a domain of infinite possibilities. The non-attained should be evermore the impulse and inspiration of the present. Not yet having apprehended, but pressing on toward the goal, describes the struggle of each believing heroic soul.

We have now seen that in the apostolic age, all who believed on Christ as the Son of God and were willing to obey Him, were, through obedience, accepted to fellowship in the church, and that faithfulness to

Christ continued this relation; that the largest liberty was allowed in non-essentials; in matters of expediency and judgment.

But the Christian religion on its way to us from the days of the apostles passed through degenerating influences which corrupted its doctrine and practice and obscured its glory. It suffered an eclipse of faith. It passed through politics in the Roman church and was stained by intrigues, jealousies and materialism. It passed through barbarous times and was laden with cruelties. It passed through abstract philosophy and became colored and falsified. It has been in the hands of the school-men and loaded down with doctrines and dogmatic theology. It has been in the hands of sectarians and they have shivered the holy genius into splinters. Still, Christianity runs onward, impelled not by Romanism, or Calvinism, or Arminianism, or even by general orthodox thought, but by the power and impulse of the personal Christ, and his immutable word. Christ transcends, in power to control thought and life, all the doctrines and philosophies of men. The opening era of Christianity was characterized by a personal faith in the personal Christ, and obedience to Him. In the second century began speculative thought, and an effort to make doctrinal statements church standards, and with this effort came controversies over speculative questions which led to councils to settle disputed points and to establish positive dogmas of belief. After the council of Nice these decrees were supported and enforced by authority; and the one

simple faith of the apostolic age was either mingled with, or lost in, a maze of theories and speculations.

Then came a servile bowing down to authority and the invocation of human power to support the faith, all of which led to, and traveled on through, the dark ages. It was but natural that some should protest against this condition, and we have the revolts of the Albigenses, of Wickliffe and of Luther.

New forces were combining to produce new results. Men began to awaken to other thoughts than definitions of God, or of the soul, or theories of fate and free-will. But new thoughts were met by the authority of the church and the tortures of the dungeon and the stake. However, men were thinking and the world began to move. The word of God, the lives of men, the facts and forces of nature, all received a new study. In the fifteenth century the art of printing was invented, and with this came a powerful impulse in the world of thought. In the same century our continent was discovered; the same mighty century gave the world Copernicus, and Leonardo da Vinci, and Luther with his Bible and ninety-five theses. In the same epoch, Keplar, with his laws of motion, and Galileo, with his telescope, appear on the arena.

Forces hitherto unmeasured, are combining to usher in a better day for our world. At last the long, deep sleep of the centuries is broken, and all the civilized world arises from its dreamy couch. But the spirit of power and persecution was not yet dead. The sixteenth century imprisoned and burned Bruno

and Servetus. The seventeenth century condemned and imprisoned Galileo for his ideas of astronomy; it also gave the world a Newton, a Hobbs, a Descartes, a Spinoza, a Locke, and a Leibnitz; great thinkers in the domain of mind and nature. These investigators were pressing out into new fields, discovering new facts, making new demonstrations, slaying superstitions and diffusing light, while the press gave wings to their thoughts and sent them to all who could read.

Thus in the first century of the Christian era, we have simple faith in Christ and loyal obedience to his commands.

In the second century, we have the beginning of speculative thought, followed by councils and creed-making. Then come church authority and persecutions reaching into the dark ages.

Then come the revival of thought, the Reformation, and all the wonderful impetus of discoveries and advances in the physical sciences. We have the revolt of enlightened reason against human authority embodied in hierarchies and councils.

Reason thus breaking loose from long confinement and fighting its way to liberty, swung too far to the other extreme and became defiant and destructive of the faith. The French Revolution was the sad climax. England halted on the precipice, and Germany, more slow and reflective, struck for higher regions of thought. Thus, briefly, we present a survey of centuries, and we see that one extreme begets another.

Ours is pre-eminently an intellectual age; the pres-

ent is refusing to believe anything until it is proven to be true. The rational faculty comes to the front and is brought to bear upon every question. For twelve consecutive centuries a metaphysical, speculative, theological cloud hung over the world like a London fog. In the sixteenth century light began to penetrate the air and touch the world and a great religious migration set in. Up to this time words, and theories, and doctrines had fallen upon the world like the snows of a northern winter, completely burying vast areas of life, and our world was waiting for the warm sunshine of a more benevolent and practical religion to give life and bloom to the wintry scene. To-day we stand over the words of the past, silent and cold, as though we were indifferently viewing the fossil remains of some long past age.

The modern world is an aroused world. What will come to pass next is the thrilling wonderment of the present.

Of necessity such an age will be restive of restraints, and more or less defiant of authority from whatever source.

Just here is where the danger lies. Modern liberalism strikes not only at human authority in matters of religion, but it makes vicious thrusts at the Bible as well. Having set up the habit of denying and discarding, we must not go too far. The Bible has a divine origin and carries with it the authority of Christ and truth eternal.

We have seen that the room for liberty and individuality in Christianity is immense ; but that form of

liberalism now abroad in the land which does not stop with breaking idols to pieces, but strikes indiscriminately at the evil and the good, is not the liberty of Christianity. It not only strikes down human creeds, but it would strike down the Bible also. It not only scouts the metaphysical theology of the past, but the incarnation of Christ and the story of the cross are treated with indifference and disdain. It would eliminate everything of a supernatural character from Christianity and relegate the matchless and majestic miracles of the Bible to the region of myth and legend. With this form of liberalism we can have no sympathy. A liberalism that parts alike with human and divine authority, cannot be the freedom which Christ gives. Indeed there can be no tolerance in respect to that which is essential to the very life and existence of a system. That which can be surrendered without destroying the life of an institution may be compromised, but that which is vital, never. Even liberalists are intolerant when the vital principle which they hold (the right of every man to think and say what he pleases) is called in question. And if the principle is worth anything their intolerance is consistent and commendable. But a moment's reflection will discover the truth that absolute freedom of thought, as a matter of fact, is an impossibility. We are compelled to think according to the facts. We must interpret the law of the land, not as we please, but according to its evident meaning and the necessary rules of interpretation. Society being founded upon concessions we have no absolute free-

dom, but are compelled to think and act in harmony with the concessions. Christianity is no fickle thing that we may think and do as we please in regard to its obligations; the Lord of heaven and earth has stamped upon it His own divine authority. Christian faith is not a mere speculative exercise, but that dynamic force by which the whole mechanism of life is moved. Neither absolute freedom of thought, nor absolute freedom of action is possible to any man in civilized society, or in any practical region of the mind. Freedom of thought is allowable where the subject is purely speculative, but where the thought is the inner conviction of action, of morality, and affects not only the individual, but society, the harmfulness of the action should limit the freedom of thought. It is only in religion that men allow themselves to become the victims of a sophism which is not tolerated in any region or walk of practical conduct. Right to think and act as one pleases is limited by the law of responsibility. Absolute freedom is an absolute fiction, because it is an absolute impossibility. The freedom of Christ is freedom within the truth, and therefore the true freedom. The liberty of Paul is the liberty of law and love, the only true liberty for humanity. If man were free to think as he might choose, still he could not be free from the consequences of wrong thinking, and the same is true of action. If a man has absolute freedom in thought and action, he ought to be insured against the consequences of mistakes. And this, too, as affecting not only himself, but others also, "for none

of us liveth to himself." Liberty of thought and action has been too often rebuked and humiliated in the past to set up a claim of infallibility which may not be challenged. The history of humanity should teach us that reason is an oft erring guide and needs to be lighted by the torch of Divine truth to be a safe monitor.

Paul imprecates a cleaving curse upon the head of any being who shall dare to remodel Christianity, or substitute for it another system. He sets this matter forth with terrific power to cut off the hope of impunity from any being who should do this deed. The apostle is speaking, not about scholastic theology, or things of indifference, matters of opinion and judgment, but about the essential elements of the gospel. His statement hedges in and guards as with a flaming sword the gospel of Christ. To preach another gospel subjected its advocates to the burning curse of God. A liberalism which proposes the formation of a Christian fraternity with Christianity left out, is a liberalism that degrades principle, that imperils truth and that threatens to substitute license for liberty. A form of liberalism which makes faithfulness to the word of God, obedience to the commands of Christ, conscientious convictions, devotion to law and order, matters of secondary moment, is not true freedom, but licentious lawlessness, damaging to morals and subversive of Christianity. Such a form of liberalism is a sea without a shore, or polar star to guide the reckless mariner who may embark thereon in his perilous and uncertain way.

Where brethren differ over unimportant matters they must exercise mutual toleration, and this brings to light what toleration always pre-supposes, namely, a difference. Toleration is impossible where there is no disagreement. But what Christ has made a test of fellowship in his church cannot be compromised or set aside, and true liberty demands nothing of the kind. No one has any right to claim fellowship in any society who denies the fundamental ideas, facts and principles upon which such society is founded. The question of liberty has its limit in the law of Christ. Man's supreme responsibility to God will not allow him to indulge a form of liberty at war with the spirit of Christ and contrary to the gospel.

Christians are called upon to give none offense, to follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another and at the same time they must preserve the faith and ordinances as they have been delivered.

Liberty, then, is not licentiousness; it is hedged in by the higher law of faithfulness. When the essential elements of the gospel are imperiled by disloyalty in faith, or practice, toleration becomes a crime against the authority of Christ and the welfare of humanity. The limit of toleration has now been reached and a liberalism that would continue fellowship with those who are disloyal to Christ, is rebellion against God and cruelty to the world. Up to this point all things may be borne, but if the authority of Christ is to be defied, the "one faith" set aside, his

commands ignored, and the unity and peace of the church destroyed, then the point of forbearance is passed and the only recourse left is separation.

Christianity has a clear and definite form of faith, bond of unity, co-operation and fellowship. Its commands and ordinances are given in no nebulous way and faithfulness only will crown the church with victory and lead to final triumph.

The most comprehensive statement ever made in regard to liberty fell from the lips of Christ, "And the truth shall make you free." Ignorance is bondage, and it held even Paul in its enslaving power, for when he was dragging men and women to prison for holding religious views differing from his own, he was ignorant of the truth which brings liberty; when the words of Christ penetrated his heart and the light of the truth shone upon his mind, he found himself a sinner; he saw a continent of Christian liberty encompassed by Divine law; he obeyed the voice of the Master, and thought, and prayed, and wrote, and hurried over land and sea to publish the glad tidings amid a new freedom.

The same principle of ignorance and error which drove Saul to madness, widened out, made the awful wars of religion in the past, and soiled the names of Catholic and Protestant.

Ignorance, sincerity, and assumed authority are the evil gates through which the old fanatics burst in upon our race and committed such depredations.

Jesus looked deep and saw that as rapidly as truth came to man, so rapidly would come emancipation.

The possession of the truth is the growth of individual privilege and freedom.

When the truth shall be the individual possession of each mind and heart, then the united hands of earth's children shall weave the immortal chaplets of liberty. As the light of truth advances the church is flying from the slavery of ignorance and opinion; and fanaticism and cruelty of action cease.

Truth has wide arms and embraces every interest of man and hurries the race along towards a larger liberty. The truth of God is a sun which shines upon two worlds; it not only lights the mountains and vales of this lower creation, but casts its sheen of glory upon the land everlasting and the city whose builder and maker is God.

Man must open his heart to receive the truth and mass his information as the scattered hills gather the rain-drops into a river. The stream of truth and morals is a constantly augmenting one, and daily deepens and widens as it flows through the vale of man. It should be the business of each life to select the pencils of light which fall upon our world and gather them up into a sun. Each life should be an enlargement of the intellectual and spiritual estate of mankind.

To-day, around the race in all the great centers of civilization, there pours a flood of light which issues from that Being defined as "God with us." The immediate work of the gospel is to revolutionize the individual soul by planting regenerating forces therein. It proposes to regulate the conduct of its

subjects and secure the largest liberty by general principles and broad precepts in all the multiform phases and relations of life. A wide intelligence makes men free; not statutes and enactments, but the individual possession of the truth. Every advance made will be a distributing force Godward and manward.

Once the church shed blood, or twisted thumbs and broiled and burned for any deviation of opinion upon the smallest matter. But all this has been brought to an end by such thought and investigation as has put men in possession of larger measures of truth. Moving about little circles of opinion and theory and speculation each one excluded some brother and built up a petty despotism upon merely speculative questions.

But a powerful form of thought has come; Christianity is seen to be a life fashioned by immortal principles, and opinions, and theories, and speculations are being put away in their final tomb. The domain of practicalness is being enlarged and lifeless theories are being dismissed from service for a life fashioned after the example of Christ. Private notions may be entertained without harm, but the great tide of human souls has no need of these limited worlds and little islands of opinion and speculation are being passed on the way to the continent of Christian liberty. A heavenly Father, a divine Savior, and personal righteousness are of more value than all theories; and the heart filled with these mighty ideas and forces, each life may be an advanc-

ing triumph, and every day may hang out banners of victory.

We are coming to a better appreciation of that practical discrimination made by Christ himself when he said, "I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me." Matt. 25: 35, 36. A practical form of thought has fallen upon our world like a summer time, and words, and terms, and statements, and theories, which cannot be fitted into human life, are being invited to give place to the practical and useful. The mission of the Master is comprehended in the salvation of the lost, and this is secured, not by theory and metaphysics, but by attachment to Christ and personal righteousness. Whether Christianity is liberty or bondage, depends entirely upon the spirit of those who are under its control. The liberty of Christianity is not a licentious lawlessness; it is not self-indulgence; it is liberty within law. Christians are not raised to such a state of freedom that there is no more law for them; that the enactments of Christ are outgrown, so that each soul can make its own law and live according to the dictates of its own sweet will in its own world. Rather the law of Christian liberty will forge and fasten the bonds of responsibility, and strengthen and quicken the consciences of men. Liberty is not freedom from restraint, it is not throwing off law and escaping from government; it is the willing acceptance of rightful

control, that subordination to law which makes it the accepted rule of life, so that one ceases to be able to discriminate between his individual will and the law which controls and directs him. When this point is reached there is liberty. When a man obeys the law of Christ because he loves Christ, accepts the law because he loves its Author, then he is conscious of no compulsion in his obedience to it, nor of restraint in his life. Then he is walking in the perfect law of liberty. The object of all high government is to get rid of the machinery of government, by teaching the governed how to govern themselves. The Christian recognizes the sovereignty of Christ, the dominancy of the Spirit, and seeks to bring every intractable faculty and every rebellious power of his being in subordination to the authority of Christ. This done and there is freedom. When one is perfectly subdued by the law of Christ, when in its full power it resides in him, and reigns there, then is he in the enjoyment of Christian liberty. The law of the new covenant is in the mind of the Christian, it is written on the heart of the believer, and is the indwelling dynamic force of Christian life.

Changes of wonderful quality and worth are taking place in our time in the religious world. The great epochs of Christian history follow the law of progress which God has stamped upon the universe. It is not possible that the quickened brain of this age should leave religion untouched. All the answered questions of earth have only been the seeds of new inquiries. The conclusions of yesterday make prem-

ises for the new logic of to-morrow. In no department of thought has the mind come to the end of its labor. In our century everything is being carried rapidly forward. The method of the present in religious investigation is to go behind Calvin, and Luther, and Roman law, and Augustine, and all the deductions of legalism, and all metaphysical reasonings and definitions concerning God, and his relations to man historical and governmental, to an inductive study of the Bible.

We have learned that while truth is changeless, our conceptions of truth may and do change with widening mental horizon and ever increasing light from the developments of history. The rising ideas of our age are the oneness of the people of God; the Divine authority of the Bible and its alone sufficiency in matters of religion; the supreme Lordship of the Christ, and faith in, and obedience to him, the only test of fellowship in the house of God. Under the power and influence of these growing forms of thought, the spirit of sect is dying, the authority of human creeds is waning and the power of ecclesiasticisms is passing. These are the growing giant ideas of our age which make the horizon of the future throbbing and tremulous with their rising glory and power. A deep under-current is flowing through this human world, running down from the days of Christ and his apostles and is reproducing in our time the beautiful and simple Christianity of the New Testament. It is the especial business of this age to ascend the stream of Christianity to its fountain and

take the water of life pure and sparkling at its source. Students of the Bible must push back of Wittenburg, back of Germany, back of Westminster, back of Rome, until, like faithful pilgrims, staff in hand, they rest within the gates of Jerusalem. Christ and his apostles gave the world a specific, definite message, so far as the facts and commands of Christianity are concerned.

They announced a definite bond of union, co-operation and fellowship. Theirs was not an empty mission which they hid beneath glittering generalities and nebulous statements. Christianity having a definite faith, and specific commands, and righteous laws and principles easily apprehended, it has a just claim to be an intelligent system of religion. It recognizes the fact that every noble life is fashioned by convictions and principles. Christian life and character spring from faith in Jesus; a faith that looks to Christ, and God, and futurity, and accountability, and which causes the soul to feel all through its depths the fearful responsibility of life.

The fact must be recognized that the undeviating principles of Christianity are of wide and varied application and admit of changing modes and appliances. The one faith and the specific commands of Christ must be kept as they were delivered. These are the banks in which the ocean of Christianity must lie content, but within these banks there may be many shadings of light and cloud and many tones of sea music.

We have seen that in the primitive church the

largest liberty was allowed outside of faith in Christ and obedience to him. But to deny Christ was to deny the faith; to refuse to obey him was disloyalty to the king. Notions of depravity, theories of the atonement, of inspiration, of spiritual influence and speculations concerning the Trinity, have no more to do with Christian life and fellowship in the church than a man's notions of the philosophy of light, and heat, and sound, or the cause of the tides of the sea. "For meat no disciple must destroy the work of God, but seek the profit of many that they may be saved." Where toleration has permitted this liberty and individuality to flourish it has been an ornament and utility of religion; but where darkness killed this beautiful flower, toleration, which blooms only in a strong light, variety has drenched the land in blood. The apostles were tolerant of a great variety of ideas in regard to unimportant things and questions of expediency, matters of opinion and judgment, sabbaths, circumcision, and meats, but they would not allow the bottom rock disturbed. Differences do no harm of themselves; the harm comes from an effort to force men into a unity of details where the divine law gives no specifications. To secure this unity, the sword has been resorted to as the instrument for adults, and ignorance as the treatment for children. The policy of twelve consecutive centuries was to slay all who had reached the intelligence and independence which bring diversity, and to keep in ignorance the rising multitude. The great law of variety is not a foe to Christianity, but a law of

eminent utility. It is a law which God has passed as much as any command in the New Testament, and it cannot be repealed because it is a part of our individual thought and intelligence. When any form of diversity comes in conflict with the fundamental facts, commands and principles of Christianity, no compromise can be allowed. Should a man declare against Christ, against liberty, against love and virtue, he would be beyond the law of freedom and out into the realm of injury. Thus in the open air of Christian toleration diversity of opinion and judgment obtain. Christianity does not possess a single form of practical action, and human nature is not always a single impulse. All cannot become ministers of the word, exiles from home and wanderers over the earth.

There are many gifts, yet but one Spirit. When Christ ascended, "He gave some to be apostles; and some prophets; and some evangelists; and some pastors and teachers." Eph. 4:11. Life and its needs are multiform, and Christianity is a system which is precisely adapted to the mutable phases of society. There are hearts that would wave the banner of Christ over continents, there are others better capacitated to wave this banner over a humble home. Nature distributes life's work among many hands; and one girds himself for travel on sea and land, another enters his home with prayer and song. Christianity expands into a wide world of thought, life, action and experience. In Christ all discords are hushed. Individuality and variety make only one

world. It is a peculiarity of the mind of our time to find, not theories and abstractions, but that which is of eminent utility. This extreme practicalness enters the field of religion and shapes its thought and life. A theory that cannot produce a better life is of no value. As a student of life's problems and obligations man must ever advance and make his culture out of the new problems which ever surround him. John Stuart Mill once remarked, "that the history of religion, like the history of science, has been the history of exhausted error." Among the mistakes of our time is the neglect of the study of duty in its ever widening and multiform phases. Duty is subject to wonderful variations and must be a never ending lesson of study. It would be a great mistake to insist on doing in many particulars as did the last century. The actions of society must change with inconstant customs, and new and multiplied obligations. We should all love to have Paul's piety and eloquence, but to insist that we must shave our heads as he did, and employ the same methods, and observe the same customs, would be a ridiculous conformity to the past that would defy all progress and growth in our world. No change can come to the principles of Christianity, to the fundamental laws of action, but in applying these principles, methods and actions may be variable to meet the changeful needs of society.

The fundamental principle, love to God and man, will ever remain, but precisely what love did for man in one age it may not do in another; the principle

will remain, but the action which expresses it may assume a different form. The word of God lies unchanging, a great mountain range down from which streams of duty forever run with changing banks and changing scenes along the banks. The Bible contains but few specific details, but it does contain every principle of action the human family will ever need. It assumes the common sense of the race and thus comes along in beautiful adaptation to the new conditions of government, customs, dress, learning and necessities of mankind. It is a painful and fatal error to see Christians stand aloof from the new obligations, duties and possibilities of the present, because the Bible does not contain specifications for every action of life; such seek in vain for a "Thus saith the Lord," and by this false method they wrest and abuse that grand generalization, "Where the Bible speaks we speak, and where the Bible is silent we are silent." Many things had not come into the world when the Bible was written, and the writers could only deal in general laws and principles. In carrying out the merciful ends of the gospel many things are to be done, the method or methods of doing which are not settled by any specifications in the New Testament. Christians are at liberty to employ the best methods within their reach, provided always that such methods do not set aside the commands of Christ and the righteous principles of the gospel. In regard to the methods employed for preaching the gospel to the world, and all benevolent ministrations of the church, and all aids to its service

and worship, Christians have no positive specifications and they must be governed by general laws and principles applied according to their best judgment. And unless the church confesses this principle and regirds itself for new tasks it will fall behind a growing world, and that part of the public mind which lies outside its own walls. Seeking details and specifications in regard to matters where only general laws and principles are given, the church will ever be in bondage. It must expand until it shall include all the new interests, needs and enterprises of the present, and in each generation must adopt new methods of action to meet the new demands. Some duties are changeless, but many come and go. Battles have been waged in the past that need not to be fought any more. A new conflict is upon us, and we must gird ourselves for the contest. Many great duties, like great men, live and die. At last they are led up into the mountain solitudes, like Aaron of old, and there the Divine breast-plate, sparkling with gems, is unfastened from the bosom and the heart, once tumultuous, is ordered to rest; led up, like Moses, to be buried by angels where lonely hills shall chant a solemn service; led forth, not as a punishment, but because the people have been led through the wilderness and hence the duty is done. New voices in each age are daily sounding to new armies a new march.

The great principles of the Christian religion form a stream that flows forever onward and carries toward God every soul which, through obedience to

Christ, casts itself into its wave. But, like the stream that once flowed through Eden, its great duties divide, and multiply as it runs and forms new channels continually, so that by banks where once ran a rivulet there now rolls a majestic flood. Infinitely wise and merciful is the arrangement. No individual or age need live anywhere or in any condition, but what that heart, or that time, can each day feel the impulse of a great work, and can have the privilege of saying at the close, with one of the grandest of Christian heroes, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith," and thus be fully assured of receiving "the crown of righteousness." Such faith and action gilds the evening of life with glory and the morning of eternity with immortality.

The trend of thought in our age is away from abstractions and in the direction of faith in the personal Christ and obedience to him. The tendency at present is to take the great working ideas of Christianity, strip off the husks of speculative doctrines and rest in the great facts, commands and principles of Christ. As a result religious sentiment is less superstitious and more intelligent than in the past; less actuated by fear and more by knowledge; lives less in damps and shadows and more in the light; and has become less a blind impulse and more a law written in the heart, at once a passion and a principle. Stakes and fagots have disappeared, inquisitorial examinations have given place to friendly utterances over differences of opinion and judg-

ment; and faith and action are no longer forced, but voluntary.

Here is a system whose moral magnitudes have excited the admiration of mankind, whose mercies have revived hopes long dormant in the bosoms of despairing multitudes, whose sublime solitaries have defied the antagonisms of nineteen centuries of tossing thought, and whose sublime revelations have illumined the path of untold millions in their tempestuous journey to eternity. It is that power which gathers the congregation for public worship, or leads a single pensive spirit to a closet of penitence and prayer. It sends the missionary around the world, builds and glorifies the Christian home, and fashions and tones all high civilizations. Christianity arises from a single fountain; faith in Christ, the divine Redeemer, and its beautiful, simple service ever points the thoughtful mind to its high origin. And to the fountain whence it came it at last returns, and thus strangely weaves together its origin and its destiny.

To conclude: Christianity is not a system of intolerance, it does not refuse to any the liberty of opinion, or the right of private judgment. Its general laws and principles are so broad that it adapts itself fully to the new conditions, customs and needs of a growing world. The essential facts, elements and principles of the gospel are immutable; its specific commands and ordinances must be kept as they were delivered: "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because

there is no light in them." A form of liberalism that would add to, or change, or reject, the commands and ordinances of the gospel, deny the "one faith," and set aside the authority of Christ, cannot in loyalty to the "one Lord" be allowed. Hence Christianity refuses fellowship with unbelievers, the disobedient and the unfaithful. But at the same time it holds out the Divine clemency to all, and ever seeks, by exhibitions of the love and mercy of God displayed in the gospel, to win all men to Christ.

The liberty of Christianity is liberty within law; it finds its limit in faithfulness to Christ. In all matters of opinion, expediency and judgment, the largest liberty is allowed consistent with Christian character and peace. Christianity being a system of remedial mercy, it cannot be an intolerant or persecuting power. The emblem of its Spirit is a dove, and the banner that waves over its bloodless victories is white.

HOW SHALL WE SUSTAIN THE GOSPEL IN THE CITIES?

BY D. R. DUNGAN.

The question which has been assigned me is one of the most practical and profitable that will come before this Lectureship. I come to it with no air of dogmatism. I have much evidently yet to learn. And if I shall succeed in awakening that interest in it which its importance demands, I shall be satisfied. Whether my views shall be adopted or not is a small matter. If they shall be rejected it will only indicate that they are not sound. Better views will be accepted in their place. Hence what I have to say is for the purpose of eliciting that discussion that will help us to a right way of doing work, that we may be more efficient in advancing the interests of the Master's cause.

For several reasons the apostles went to the cities rather than into country localities. So did the Master during his ministry, go into the cities and villages for the same reasons. (1) Because of the savage condition of society, the people lived much in the villages and towns for protection. Hence these were the places where they could find people to hear them. (2) The Jewish synagogues were there, and audiences gathered there once a week to worship. As

Jews they could speak to them from their own Scriptures concerning the Christ. (3) It was much easier to reach the country localities from the city than to reach the city from country localities. Hence they aimed to establish the cause in these marts of trade, and make them the basis of supplies while carrying the gospel into the rural districts. The wisdom of this procedure is apparent to every one.

All these reasons, however, do not now exist for this plan of operations. People and places of meeting are now to be found in the country. If the numbers are not so great, and if some of the facilities are not present, still the opportunities are good to spread the gospel by going there. Yet, as life increases, the cities grow in numbers much more rapidly than the country. And, though the temptations to sin are much greater, though the devil uses some of our great cities as his headquarters, still it is our duty to preach there the gospel. Many things may be found to hinder our work which do not withstand us in other places. But for all that we must go there and preach the gospel. Not only so, but the influences of these places where humanity congregates, are carried throughout the whole country, and unless we shall conquer the cities, they will conquer us.

As a religious body we have not done much work yet in the cities. Many of our pioneers were not prepared for that work. The country yielded to them much more easily, and hence they directed their energies to the rural districts. I do not find fault with this management. Indeed, considering

the times and our forces, I think that it was wise. But whatever may have been the duties and necessities of the past, it must be conceded that it is now incumbent upon us to carry the gospel into the great centers of trade and life. The efforts we have made to do this have not been, in the highest sense, encouraging, and it is now our duty, if possible, to discover the elements of weakness in our work, as well as the features of strength, that we may remove the one and help the other. We have sometimes felt disposed to blame our pioneers for not accomplishing more in the great highways of human life than they did. And many yet seem to stand in doubt of the adaptability of the plea of the restoration to the people in our cities. But it should be remembered that we had but few men and but little means to work with. With these facts before us we can easily excuse them for going where the work would have the greatest immediate effect for good. I can think of several things which have hindered our success in the cities; some of which can be removed.

1. One of the things that has prevented our success in city work, has been the want of missionary support till the work would be self-sustaining. We sometimes compare ourselves with other religious bodies who began in some city the same time that we did. And as we find that they have increased much more rapidly than we have, we hastily conclude that cities are not the places for us to work, or that we have not the kind of men that are needed to do that work. We forget that these bodies have had mis-

sionary support, and that the few men among us who undertook this work were without such support. It takes a long time to arrest the attention of the people of a large city and produce any change in the religious faith of any considerable number of persons. The idea of mission work had hardly then occurred to us. Hence the few men among us who were disposed to do that kind of work did not have the support which they needed, and on that account no large measure of success was realized.

2. We must remember, too, that it is but a little while since we became orthodox. Before that we were something like the Mormons, or Sandemanians: a set of crude errorists, only to be despised by those who had grown too large and lived too long to have their evangelism called in question. Houses were not then open to us, and our places of worship were not to be visited by those of any other ecclesiastic fold. We were supposed to spread some sort of spiritual distemper, and were to be quarantined and fenced against by all the faithful in Israel.

In the small towns and villages and country localities this public and private proscription did us as much good as harm; many times it did more. The people had but one place to go, and therefore they were permitted to hear both sides. Our plea was so evidently right, that those who heard it under these circumstances were disposed to accept of it. But in the cities it was not so. All the people had places to go, and there were plenty of pastors to see that they went where they belonged. This kept us from

a hearing, without which it was impossible to convert the people. We have no particular right to complain. Every new truth has been treated in the same way. Any truth which opposes long-standing customs and religious forms will meet with the same treatment. But we have passed through the period of misapprehension and consequent misstatement; we have nearly passed the lines of battle with our religious neighbors. They are exceedingly tired of the contest, and wish us to accept of their friendship. And while we can make no compromise with anything which refuses to have the whole gospel preached, and an entire submission to Christ demanded, it is fair to say that we may now expect to do much more by influencing the religious bodies of the day to accept the whole truth in themselves than in getting them to leave those bodies and take their position with us. It is now much easier for us to do work in the cities than it was a few years ago. We are not now fenced against as we have been. We have much more strength to maintain mission work, and are beginning to understand something of the duty to do so. Seeing, then, the great duty of the hour, and that the times are favorable for the accomplishment of the proposed work, it becomes us to address ourselves to the means by which we can, with greatest effect, carry the truth as it is in Christ into our great cities and establish it there.

3. One thing which now hinders our success in city work is the pride which is so common everywhere. There are many who prefer to be associated

with those who have long been known to the world, and whose names will give them position and standing in the world. Some accept of Christianity partly as a mercenary consideration. They do not mean to put it upon such a basis as that. But the first thing after determining to be religious is to know where it will be most respectable for them to go. They have a kind of common idea that as there are good and bad in all churches, there is no real difference as to where any one may take membership, that is, that God does not care where they take membership, and, finding that there will be some earthly advantages in having membership in one place above another, they go where they can get the greatest amount of trade, or personal help in this life. Such persons will leave us in a city where we have but a few members, or where we are poor or but little known. They go for the *eclat* or the *gold* they get somewhere else. They go out from us because they were not of us. They would follow in good report, but not in evil. If they received worldly distinction or consideration by remaining with us, they would gladly do so. But as it is to their advantage in this respect to be numbered somewhere else, they go. As Israel sighed for the flesh pots of Egypt, so do these turn ever to the vanities of this world.

4. Others are attracted by the splendid buildings or the gorgeous ritual. Trappings and pageantry sweep them off their feet.

This disposition is so much like that of which we have already made mention that it seems hardly

necessary to make another statement of the malady. Still this class may be free from the mercenary spirit. They may not be looking for friends or favors; they are simply carried away with the splendor of appearances. Services which are mysterious and incomprehensible are gracious in their sight. Cardinal colors, caps and crowns, crosses and gowns, have in them a sanctity for those who worship only with their eyes and ears. As to doing the will of the Lord, or humbling themselves under the mighty hand of God, it has not occurred to them. Their religion comes altogether by impressions. It is "*the impressive service*" for which they clamor. They would be willing to be swept up to glory, to be carried away on a chariot of fire, but as to toiling and serving to secure a home in heaven, it has never once entered their minds. They find many in the cities who are like themselves, who glory in appearance, but not in heart. Many are the bids that are made for them. Houses are reared and services are directed with special reference to their eyes. And they go where waters of a full cup are wrung out to them. They would have the church to be an æsthetic club, where all sacrifices should be offered to the goddess of fashion and show.

5. There are others who are just as worldly and frivolous as those I have mentioned, but their carnality takes a different turn. They lack the culture of others, they are wanting in matters of taste, but they associate all honor and greatness with wealth. They may not possess it themselves, but they wish to take

credit for it and are willing only to associate with those who are rich. In the cities they have a fair chance to satisfy their cravings for that popularity that comes to the circles of the wealthy. They will break over all church lines rather than to mingle with the poor. They wish to be known among the number of those who can serve God and mammon both. Of all strange mental maladies this would seem least likely to manifest itself in religion; indeed, I would feel disposed to doubt the possibility of such fellowship, but for the absolute and frequent occurrence of such things. The god of this world has blinded their minds lest they should see the light of the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ.

6. Very many persons are carried away with numbers. They care much less for quality than for quantity. Give them the large church and they are happy. If there are but few disciples in the city they will never make themselves known. They prefer the broad road where the thousands walk, to the narrow way that shows but few travelers. If there is a revival and everybody joins, they will do like the rest. They are light persons and are easily carried about with every wind of doctrine. Indeed, they are not particular about any doctrine, for one is about the same to them as another.

7. The worship of the preacher is a great hindrance to the worship of God. As a people, we are entirely free from this species of idolatry. Indeed, we have become so alarmed at it in others that we have gone to an opposite extreme, and our preachers

are left without that support before the people which they ought to have. We have men whose influence for good is crippled in the city for the want of outspoken commendation on the part of the membership. And yet we are troubled with the same natural weakness that afflicts our neighbors; we, too, want a popular preacher. Not a few of our churches are looking for a preacher that will draw. They may not assist in getting the crowd, they may say no encouraging word to him, nor anything to the people for him, but they will readily measure his ability to do good by the number who go to hear him. Newman, Beecher and Talmage have their worshipers by the thousands, while there are many smaller divinities who only attract the devotion of the community in which they reside. Thousands join the preacher. Remove him and their religion would be gone. This is true in many great revivals. The Holy Spirit gets on the same train that the revivalist does, and leaves at the same time. It is distasteful to think that men's persons are had in reputation, and that people are attracted more by the genius, eccentricity and oratory of the preacher than they are by the love of God and his truth. But such is the fact in many instances.

8. Our plea is unpopular to many persons because it is too narrow. They are accustomed to creeds of human make, and the demand that they shall assent to them or be denied membership. No fault is found with this for the demand is made on the basis of sectarian right. They are supposed to

have the right to say what they believe, and therefore, what all others shall believe who are to be associated with them. And we wonder that they do not give to us the privilege of believing as we please and to demand that others shall believe as we do or not be taken into fellowship with us! The religious world would not be offended at us for this, if we put it on a level with their plans of fellowship; if we would say we do this in our own name, this is one of our peculiarities, they would bow politely and say, "All right, neighbors, your church is a divine providence, so that all can find a religious home which will be agreeable, and we will ever pray for your prosperity in the Lord." But we deny that it belongs to men to do anything of the kind. We say that we demand of men that they shall believe and do just what the Lord has required, neither more nor less, that we do not dare to have other terms of fellowship than those which the Master has given. This, in substance, says that *their* human institutions are without any authority, and that they are standing in the way of that unity of the people of the Lord which the Scriptures require. This is the head and front of our offending.

9. *The want of conviction respecting the need of keeping the divine commandments is a hindrance to our plea.* This age is one of peculiar weakness on this point. A large number of religious persons have the idea that as to whether they keep the commandments of God or not, it is a matter of no particular concern. They have a high regard for the forms

that are ordained by the churches, and but little respect for those that are ordained of God. They regard us as formalists simply because we are tenacious for keeping the commandments of God as He has revealed them to us by His apostles and prophets, though they may be equally tenacious in keeping the ordinances and traditions of the churches to which they belong. The idea that they are formalists has never occurred to them. There are many persons who care but little for the traditions of the churches, or the customs of the fathers, or for the commandments of God either. And yet, they regard themselves as Christians in the fullest sense of the term. Beecher would say, in baptizing infants, that it was an ordinance which they found in the church, and that they continued to observe it because experience proves it to be profitable. He finds no divine warrant for it, nor does he suppose that any is needed. With him as with many others, whether they do that which God said, or something else which they prefer, is simply a matter of expediency. That which, in the light of human experience, shall be found to result the most favorably to their work, will be most readily adopted. Of the two, they might prefer to keep God's commandments, than to follow the directions of men, if it suited them equally well to do so.

This sentiment has extended so far, and this feeling is so general, especially in our great cities, that our views of absolute obedience to God are repugnant to many persons. In no age of the past has convic-

tion respecting the divine will been so conspicuous by its absence. A kind of current of maudlin sentimentalism has been, in this way, created which is in direct opposition to our efforts in the large cities.

10. *The general demand to be entertained has turned religion into a kind of Sunday theatre or place of pastime.* Preachers feel that they are compelled to reduce themselves somewhat in this particular that they may have a hearing. The fear of empty pews, like a nightmare, seems to direct all their energies in this effort to please and entertain the crowd. Because of this, some of the brightest pulpit lights of this age have gone astray. I could mention several names familiar to every one, in the Chicago pulpit, who were sound in their orthodoxy before the fire, but, finding themselves unchurched, their houses having gone up in the flames, they resorted to the theatres and opera houses for places in which to preach. Here they were greeted by a new class of hearers. The men and women who attended these places of doubtful entertainment during the week, found it convenient to go there on the Lord's day as well. Their purposes in attending these public gatherings were about the same, whether on week day or on the day of sacred worship. In large numbers they were unbelievers and were ready to applaud and pay for every remark that would slur Moses or present the Christian world in an unfavorable light. The natural inclination to be regarded with favor on the part of these men seduced them into many doubtful statements. On account of these

things, they immediately became popular. This being seen by others who, though they had "neither wit nor words nor worth to stir men's blood," yet having an eye to the recompense, have tried to commit heresy enough, at least, to be kicked into some sort of notoriety. The large number who have thus sought to be entertained, and have been ready to pay for the entertainment, have succeeded in drowning the voice of religious conviction and placing the worship of God simply on the basis of pastime.

Because many have become popular and the churches have grown largely in number by being headed in this way, a kind of demand seems to pervade the city that all churches shall be turned into semi-Sunday-theatres and places of recreation. In many places the people never go to worship, but simply to satisfy conscience by some religious forms and to be delighted by the wit, the eloquence, the ingenuity or the eccentricity of the preacher; to be charmed by the fascinating ritual, or to be delighted with the music. To such a people, under such circumstances, the simple service of God is exceedingly distasteful; and it is no cause of wonder if our ablest men who are true to God and his truth are not sought after by the people.

11. *The want of discipline in many churches is a great hindrance to the cause of truth* The sectarianism of the age and the desire for a popular church has made many willing to retain bad persons, if they were only liberal payers. And because iniquity abounds the love of many has waxed cold. A mere

worldling looks upon all this in a practical way; especially as he notices a number of men who have become bankrupt and retired from business penniless, paying all their creditors with good will only. Then he sees them start into business again in a few months full-handed. He knows that there is in the whole matter unadulterated rascality practiced. Perhaps he has been injured by some one of these, and as the church retains him, he comes to regard their religion as a farce.

Scarcely any one thing to-day so hinders the success of truth in winning souls to Christ as this sinful delinquency of our churches in failing to meet the sin of the age and to remove it from their lines. We may condemn the world as we please for its false logic in looking only from the standpoint of these hypocrites, but the truth is, they regard the spirit of the church as equal to the characters of these men who are retained in the fellowship. Then again, because of our unwillingness sometimes to furnish a religious home to persons who do not live the truth, many leave us and go to those places where there is greater toleration for bad living.

12. *Bad reading is a great power against Christ.* The vast number of papers now published in the country, all seeking for support from the reading public, seems to have weakened the better intentions of many editors. They publish papers for money, and they therefore publish what will sell. The doubtful reading which in this way is furnished to the children, even of Christian families, weakens

religious energies, forms wrong tastes, corrupts good manners and morals as well. In many families a religious paper is not taken at all, or if taken, only to lie on the center-stand covered out of sight with sensational journals. The children read that which is sensational and which in itself in large measure is evil. And because of the daily thought-habit thus induced, they drift away from all religious purposes, and many times from virtue also. This is one of the difficulties that it will be hard to remove, and yet against which Christian men must set their faces like flint. There must be a war of extermination, or these papers and their editors must be regenerated. There is one law in nature and in grace alike, as we sow we shall reap. If we sow to the wind, we shall reap the whirlwind; if we sow to the flesh, we shall reap corruption; but if we sow to the spirit, we shall reap life everlasting. If we fill the minds of our children with wrong thoughts, either purposely or from delinquency of duty, the result is the same. They are morally and religiously injured by this bad mental diet, and if they are ever brought into the church, they are only Christians by the halves, full of vanity and encompassed with many infirmities.

13. *The saloon withstands the religion of Christ.* The people in the country are injured by the liquor business, but not to the extent of that injury wrought in the cities. Young men especially are being tempted daily by its seductive powers.

If one will only examine the churches in our large towns he will find that there are very few young men

who are in their fellowship. In many of our cities, if we should uncover the churches at 8 P. M. on the Lord's day we would not find in them half as many young men as we could find by visiting the saloons of that city at the same hour. The law may prohibit the saloon keepers from selling on that day, but they care nothing for that prohibition. Saloons that are able to evade the law will continue to sell, whatever may be the ruin wrought.

At our homes there are as many boys as girls; in our public schools the sexes are about equally divided, but in our churches there are nearly three women to one man. This is largely accounted for by the temptation constantly before the young men. They are ensnared in their early life, thrown into vitiating society, and either dragged down to hell by a direct route, or so spiritually maimed as to be worth nothing religiously while they live. If these could be saved from drunkenness, from the society of drinkers and all the consequences of the evil associations connected therewith, they would be church members. They would not only be in the church, but would constitute largely the working force of the church. Satan has done nothing in all the ages indicative of greater shrewdness than in his successful manipulations of the political forces by which the saloons are maintained. We flatter ourselves that our children are at least safe from these snares until they have reached their majority. This is a great delusion. A large committee of searchers in one day, Sunday at that, found 30,000 minors in the saloons of

Chicago. Perhaps another 30,000 might have been found if every one had been discovered.

These young men are not only started on a route to evil, but many of the boys are corrupted early in their teens, put into the high school of cut-throats and thieves, and sent out to do the work of the enemy of all good. Many fathers and mothers deceive themselves with the idea that *their* boys are safe, only to wake up to a realizing sense of their danger when it is too late. The man who is not the enemy of the saloon is not the friend of his race, and does not love the church of Christ.

Having seen a few of the many evils and obstacles in the way of the success of truth in our cities, we now come to the second and more practical part of our lecture, how to succeed in the work of the ministry in our cities. It is well to have before us, as we are preparing for this work, the things that oppose us; it is proper to know the strength and skill, and plan of the enemy; but it is absolutely necessary to prepare to meet him and to overcome him in detail. I will, therefore, mention some preparations, plans and efforts by which we may certainly succeed.

1. *I suggest in the first place that we must remove the hindrances of gospel success to the extent of our ability.* It would be idle for us to license men to train rattlesnakes under the sidewalks to bite our children as they go to school, simply because we have a remedy at home against that poison. It would be much safer and more sensible to kill the snakes and imprison the man who was mean enough to keep

them. So I would say, that to the extent of our ability, it is our Christian duty to remove things that hinder the success of the cause of Christ.

There are various ways of meeting and defeating these engines of power, but I have not time nor space to mention them here. Taking the list I have already given, we can easily make our own preparations for a campaign in righteousness against the hosts of the enemy of souls.

2. *Our missionary plan and zeal must be made equal to this work, so that men, competent men, shall be sent to our large cities and maintained there, even though they should get no support from the city itself, until they shall be able to build up the cause.* This will require greater liberality among the people of Christ than we have thought of before, and yet it is our reasonable service. If the brotherhood of the United States could be induced to take hold of this, and give as they ought to give, all our large cities might be blest with the pure gospel of Jesus Christ.

3. *A common need, I might say a universal need, and especially in all our city churches, is the increase of piety.* If they could reach such a degree of perfection as would render the house of God more attractive to all church members than the hundred places of sensual entertainment, that would make the prayer meetings more delightful to young people than the skating rinks, we would have gained much in that respect. I know of nothing that can be done by any city pastor that would result in greater good than introducing family worship throughout the

entire church. If we were to enumerate all the homes where the Bible is not read, and prayers are not made, as compared with those which have morning and evening devotions, we would be surprised at the revelation of godlessness. There are many ways by which the preacher can raise the devotion of his people; one is to increase his own piety, to fill his own heart with the love of Christ, to fill his sermons with it, to exhibit it in his own life until it becomes the very spiritual atmosphere in which he lives and moves. The old saying, "Like people like priest," is just as true when reversed. A pious ministry will go far toward a pious membership. Much may be done by increasing the interest of the prayer meetings. Let them be full of song, full of spirit, full of hope. Let the speeches be short, the prayers brief but many, and the meeting be closed in proper season. Cottage meetings (a combination of the prayer and social meeting) may be held in many houses. At these meetings, but few, if any, will refuse to participate. By this method the whole church may be accustomed both to speak and pray in public. If the church is large, the pastor will not be able even to superintend, or be present at these meetings, but in this large church he will have plenty of men and women who can, and would gladly assist him in that good work. Meetings for Bible reading may be held profitably and regularly. These will greatly increase the godliness and zeal of the membership. I would especially recommend that all persons on becoming members of the church shall be put to work without

delay, the new zeal and the pleasure of a new fellowship will make it pleasant for those who have just named the name of Christ, to take whatever part they can, if they are encouraged by the preacher and by the elders of the church. They know that there will not be much expected of them, and therefore the more readily respond to any call. It is a good time to train them both to pray and to pay.

There may be a zeal that will bring temporary success, in the absence of piety, but such success is usually short-lived and worth but little. Unless our ministry makes the people better, and fits them for heaven, it is worthless. Hence, the great effort of every preacher should be to build up the people in righteousness and true holiness.

4. *Preach doctrine till the people know the difference between being wrong and being right.* A multitude of flabby souls are flooding the earth with sentimental saliva in opposition to what they denominate "doctrinal sermons." They beseech the pastor to say nothing that can in any way give offense to those whose views are different from ours. And since all kinds of iniquity are covered up by a pretended faith, there is nothing left that we may preach to please this class of church-goers. The preacher is expected to exhibit splendid ingenuity by saying nothing in the most attractive manner. He is not at liberty to oppose any of the secret or public sins of the age, for in doing this he would become exceedingly personal. All this has created a demand for theological puppets who simply perform as

directed by these fashionable pew-holders. It is our duty not only to give heed to ourselves, but "to the doctrine, and continue therein, for in doing this we shall both save ourselves and them that hear us." We must "preach the word, and be instant in season and out of season, reproving, rebuking with all long suffering and doctrine." Right doing is the result of right believing; and that faith may be correct, the teaching must be true, the gospel must be preached in its entirety. If we shun to declare the whole counsel of God we will leave our skirts stained with the blood of other men. There can be no strength nor force in the churches unless there is proper teaching. We must not preach simply to please godless hearers, but declare the entire will of God to men; "knowing the terror of the Lord, we must persuade men." We must warn the people against every approaching danger, and cause them to shun every appearance of evil. It is for the want of sound teaching that many of our own members are so easily led astray. They are half educated, baked on but one side; and the very day that the church is brought into difficulty or its numbers decreased they are ready to go elsewhere for popularity and *eclat*.

5. *Secure comfortable houses in which to worship, within the easy reach of the people.* It would be as reasonable to expect the people coming in to trade to go to the outskirts of the city to buy their goods and groceries as to expect the masses to go far out of the way to attend church. Of course, if they are Christians, if they are thoroughly taught in

the word of God, they will go where they belong, but such persons are the exception and not the rule. If we could get our own members to attend our meetings in some out-of-the-way place, or in an inferior building, we could not get others to do so; and we cannot convert the people unless we can get them to hear us, for faith comes from hearing. I don't mean that our houses shall be the principal attraction. There is more power to convert and save the people in the gospel of Christ, faithfully preached, and exemplified in the lives of Christians, than can be lent to brick and mortar; but while we depend upon the gospel as the power of God unto salvation, our houses of worship should be plain, respectable in appearance, and comfortable. The neglect of this common sense, through stinginess or want of taste, which some have mistaken for piety, has done much to hinder the success of the gospel in many of our cities.

6. *Use all the forces within the church.* Many churches are looking for pastors who will contain, in themselves, all the elements of attraction and devotion; who will have religion enough for themselves and the congregation also. The principal demand, in looking for a new pastor, is that he shall "draw." They want a man who is attractive in the pulpit and competent to visit all the families in the church at least once in two weeks. But, if there be eighty or one hundred families, with that number of single persons, clerking, working in shops and factories, etc., the preacher would not be able to do this visiting

if he were an expert in the use of the bicycle. Church members need visiting, especially they need to know that some one is looking after them, that they are under the eye and supervision of some competent and faithful person. But no man is able to thus take the charge of a large church and perform well all its duties in person. He must at least give half his time to his preparation for Bible class, Sunday-school and the pulpit; hence, at best, he cannot have more than two and one half or three days in the week for visiting. But, in a large church, many others may be found to render all needful assistance. The church may be apportioned to its several elders and these may call to their assistance visiting committees both of men and women. Our women, as a rule, have but little appointed for them to do, and yet in this field they are the most competent workers; visiting the sick, visiting delinquent church members or calling on strangers. They are a very superior force. A common mistake made by many good preachers is an effort to do all the pastoral work in person; hence I think it better both for the preacher and for the church also that all the forces and abilities of the church shall have a responsible work to perform. It aids the personal piety and interest of all, and accomplishes at least ten times as much as can be accomplished in another way.

7. *We must have some way of finding our members in the cities.* There are hundreds and thousands who move into these marts of business who are members of the church before, but are never heard

of afterwards in that connection. Failing to report themselves at once, or wondering that the church does not seek them out and find them, and, perhaps, feeling somewhat neglected on that account, they become indifferent on the subject of religion. The influence with which they are surrounded leads them to other places of devotion, or, what is more usually the case, away from Christ altogether. It would be well to see that every member, changing location, carries a letter to the nearest congregation to which they are intending to locate, and that the preacher or elders of said congregation should be apprized of the fact. In this way, those who have any real identity with the church of Christ, might be found and helped before it is too late. To do this work, however, that comes under the supervision of the city pastor, competent visiting committees are an absolute necessity. The city might be divided into wards and these committees appointed over them with instruction to ascertain the religious tendencies of the new comers and to report each week. Also, it should be made their duty to invite all persons to the public meetings. In a church of 600 or 700 members it is not an unusual thing to find one hundred names, the whereabouts of those they represent not being known to any one. These sheep, in nine cases out of ten, are gone astray, and are as entirely lost to the church as if they had never been members. This is an evil that must be remedied, or we can never prosper in the cities.

8. *We must prepare men for work in the cities.*

The pioneers of this reformation were grand and true men, they did noble work for Christ, and yet it is fair to say that but very few of them were qualified for the work of which we speak.

They knew the story of the cross, they were well acquainted with the English New Testament and could preach the way of salvation to the sinner without the slightest possibility of mistake. But they had no training in the use of the forces that are found in the city. In respect to many of their duties as preachers in the city, they had no education and were not competent for such work. A great majority of them, therefore, turned their attention to other fields which yielded to them more readily. Even at the present time we have not a large number of men qualified for this work, and it is both wisdom and duty for us to prepare men for this field. How to prepare them is a difficult question. I would suggest that they should be men of education, of piety, of industry, of strong common sense, and of that peculiar tact that will not only render them acceptable to the people, but will enable them to adapt themselves to all circumstances and make the best of every occurrence and occasion.

9. *Our literature should be circulated in the cities.* Many of our own people do not read our papers, nor do they possess our books or tracts. And while these might be safe, their children grow up in ignorance of our plea and we lose them. A church either in the city or in the country, the members of which do not read our papers, is a weak church.

No better ally can any preacher find than a good religious newspaper. And, if he would have the church to be constant in his support, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord understandingly, he should see to it that every home is visited regularly by one or more of our best papers. A circulating library, constituted largely of our own best literature, should be had and used under the auspices of the church. Much missionary work may be done in this way. Tracts may be distributed, carrying the gospel into homes and hearts who would never hear our plea in any other way. Money expended in this way results more satisfactorily, on the whole, than means used in almost any other way.

10. *Every city church must needs be supported by a good Sunday-school.* As a people we are not up to the average in this good work. Many of our old members never attend. There were none in their childhood and they do not feel the necessity of them now. In my opinion, there are two classes that ought always to attend the Sunday-school: those who are competent to teach, and those who need to be taught. The rest may be excused. We must either save the children and turn them to Christ early in life, or they will go somewhere else, probably to the devil. It is perfectly idle to say that we will let them come to the years of maturity and then choose for themselves; for the devil will never permit them to make an unbiased choice. Early in their teens, if not before, he will have them in his school and entirely under his control. We should not only see that

our children attend Sunday-school, but we should see that they attend *our own* Sunday-school. Sending them somewhere else to Sunday-school will, nine times out of ten, send them somewhere else for church membership. If we believe that we have the truth, the whole truth, there is no reason why we should not teach it to our children, and see that their minds are not filled with falsehood. The church must be recruited from the Sunday-school or die. And if we do not work by these means we might as well write *Ichabod* over the door and retire. With my views respecting the Sunday-school, it seems proper that I should name a few elements of strength in connection with it. There are many blunders committed in the management of this department of Christian work, but I have not time to mention them. I think it better to give the few minutes that be allowed me to the presentation of the methods and means of success.

First. A superintendent is to the Sunday-school about what the pastor is to the congregation; hence, he is the most important feature in the institution. I would outline his qualifications as, (a) He should be a thorough Christian. We have no more need of ungodliness or religious indifference in this place than in the pulpit. The children naturally look to him as a guide in religious matters, and a failure in his life would be exceedingly injurious to them. (b) He should be a person of executive ability. Government should be both natural and acquired. Awkwardness, rashness, or any other defect in this

respect, will be attended with disaster. (c) He should be a person of order, of system, of plan, of arrangement, of skill, of taste. This will insure those appointments which are pleasing in themselves and profitable in their lessons. (d) He should be a person of energy and enthusiasm. Knowledge has much to do in controlling the world and reaching success, but energy and enthusiasm have more. Many of the successful men, especially in religious work, are noteworthy only for their enthusiasm. (e) He should be punctual and prompt. He should attend all the meetings of the Sunday-school and of the teachers, and he should also be on time. It will do as well, or about as well, for a preacher to be absent from his post and depend upon the church to fill the place *impromptu*, as for the superintendent to have his place filled in the same way. He must not only be present, but he must be there on time. The example and consequent inefficiency of a tardy superintendent will eventually kill any school afflicted in that way. (f) He should love children; this may be a natural gift, and it may be greatly improved; but if the love of children for their own sake and for Christ's sake is not in the heart of the superintendent, his efforts will amount to but little. (g) He should be a regular church goer. I have known superintendents who claimed that they were not able to attend church and the Sunday-school both. It will be better to get some one who is less delicate or who has more religion; for the example of the superintendent who does not attend church will soon be followed by most of the

scholars, and the church will have no hold upon them. (h) A superintendent should be a kind of assistant pastor, working with the preacher, giving him a prominent place in the school; not simply calling on him to open with prayer, for that the superintendent ought to do himself, but giving him as much prominence before the children as possible that he may the more easily influence them for good.

But some one will ask me how we are to get this model superintendent. I would recommend (1) To look for him. We will not likely find him without. (2) Pray for him. If we are to pray the Lord of the harvest to send more laborers into the field, certainly we are at liberty to ask his help in obtaining a superintendent for the school. (3) We should encourage him; he can do much more with our sympathy and support than without it. (4) The church, no doubt, has the material. It has the person if he had the education for the work. Hence, I would say, educate him. Let the pastor find this person, and see to it that his education is not wanting. Ordinarily, a man makes the best superintendent, but many times the best person in the church for this purpose is a woman. Make the choice only for the good of the school. In all this, as in the body of Christ, there should be neither male nor female. If you can find neither man nor woman in the church among its members, take the preacher. He ought not to bear this burden except as a matter of fearful necessity.

Next to the superintendent of the school in respect to importance, will be the teacher or teachers.

The mistakes of the average Sunday-school teacher are very numerous. I will simply mention a few of them. Voluntary obligation is under-valued. Because they have volunteered to do this work, and because they are not paid for it in dollars and cents, they feel at liberty to absent themselves for very insufficient reasons. They would not do this if they were teaching in the public schools. And yet their work in the Sunday-school is much more important and responsible. They under-value the need of promptness, and come so late frequently that the superintendent is in doubt as to whether they are coming at all, and is looking for some one to take their place. Tardiness, persisted in, with an occasional absence, will dissipate the class. Such teachers should be converted or dismissed. They fail many times to realize that they are responsible for the good order of the school. A disorderly school is a failure; but if the teacher will assist the superintendent by superintending his or her own class, the order will be such as will make the Sunday-school a place of delight and profit. Teachers sometimes expect the attention of scholars without winning it; but in this they are sure to be mistaken. Very frequently they undertake to teach too much and consequently get nothing taught. A teacher should be skilled in questioning, should have life and interest, should delight in the children and the Sunday-school, should be a fervent Christian and should work and teach to save the children. A common mistake is in making up classes and electing teachers to take

charge of them. It would be better for the superintendent to assign seats to those who will undertake the work, and let them collect their own classes. If they begin but with two or three, they can soon fill the space allotted them and have a prosperous class. The teacher should regard himself as a pastor, *the pastor* of a class and responsible for the souls placed under his care. Lesson leaves may be used profitably, but should never be allowed to come inside of the Sunday-school room except simply to be distributed to those who are expected to study them somewhere else.

Teachers and children alike, should bring Bibles and use them as their only text book. Teacher's meetings should be kept up and rendered as effectual as possible. In addition to learning the lesson there can be space found for normal drill in the best methods of teaching. Besides, these meetings may be the councils where the plans shall be made that will result in the conversion of many to the cause of Christ.

11. *Preachers should be permanently located in our cities.* A frequent removal from place to place is an injury both to the preacher and to the church. Business men who act in this way rarely accumulate much property. There is a wealth of good opinion that is gained by a preacher during a term of years that is capital for him and for the church, which is squandered by his removal. The church should see to it that they get a good man, and then that they keep him. And the preacher, on his part, should

make his arrangements to stay and to work there during life.

In conclusion, I would simply say to use all forces that can be employed for good. Keep the church in peace by keeping it at work. This is the best discipline and is also attended with most satisfactory results.

IMPORTANCE OF SPECIAL BIBLICAL INSTRUCTION IN MINISTERIAL EDUCATION.

BY I. B. GRUBBS.

The things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. 2 Timothy 2; 2.

It was Daniel Webster, I believe, who expressed it as his conviction that the Bible shows itself to be of divine origin in that it had survived the violence of the pulpit. While, indeed, it has pleased God to save men "through the foolishness of preaching," as the philosophic Greeks considered this divinely appointed instrumentality, we do not learn that by *foolish preaching* anything great or useful has ever yet been accomplished. The pulpit, however, notwithstanding its countless follies and failings, has borne constant testimony to the measureless worth of the Christian religion and the infallible truths of divine revelation, and has, as a consequence, been the most potent factor in the civilization and spiritual elevation of manhood. How much more efficient for good could it have been, had the faults which have interrupted its usefulness never existed! And while perfection in pulpit ministration is no more to be expected than in any other human effort to do good, we must recognize the fact that much senseless, not to say, pernicious declamation in the sacred name of

religion, has been due simply to a lack of requisite biblical training or a very culpable carelessness in efforts to present the true import of Scripture teachings.

We here emphasize, especially, the need of biblical instruction, being taught by the Apostle Paul that the preacher's highest obligation is to confine himself, as to the matter of his preaching, to the all-sufficient Word of God. The point and force in the solemn charge to Timothy, in the near approach of the time of the Apostle's departure, should constantly and in the fullest extent be felt by every proclaimer of the gospel: "I charge thee, before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the living and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom, preach the Word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts, shall they, having itching ears, heap to themselves teachers; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry." Familiar as is this passage, my brethren, no preacher can ever afford to lose sight of its deep significance and its abiding importance. No spirit of any age, no unspiritual demand of worldly culture, no unsanctified itching of irreligious ears, must ever interfere with ministerial faithfulness in the grand work of saving men through the gospel of the Son of God, and the edification of

the saved through "the engrafted Word" in all the fulness of its power and simplicity of its teachings. "The power of God unto salvation" is found in no theory of Christianity, no philosophy of religion, however beautiful or delightfully entertaining. "Preach the Word." Over the ages comes floating down to us this great utterance of the Apostle, the significant interpreter of his own great heart, the undying echo of his solemn valedictory to his faithful son in the gospel. "Preach the Word." Only in this could the Apostle recognize a divine power capable of successfully antagonizing all aversion to "sound doctrine," all unhealthy predisposition to turn away the ears from the truth in giving heed to unprofitable fables and philosophic conceits. "Beware lest any one despoil you through philosophy and vain deceit according to the rudiments of the world and not according to Christ." In such preaching there is no power whatever to save or to build up a soul into God. "The words that I speak unto you," said the great Teacher, "they are spirit and they are life." And when the great Apostle stood among the philosophic pretenders of Greece and eschewed all employment of the entertaining "words of man's wisdom," it was to the end that their "faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."

We see from all this that there was ample justification of the Apostle's solemn earnestness in his weighty charge to Timothy—a charge which we have every reason for supposing that the latter devoutly

accepted and faithfully kept. We say this especially, because of the previous careful training in "the word of righteousness" to which this noble young man had been piously subjected. His very first religious instructions were received in a sort of Bible college wherein, as far as the record goes, there were two professors and one student. It was in consequence of the unfeigned faith, which dwelt first in the grandmother Lois and in the mother Eunice, that the young Timothy was nurtured in the saving Word of God. And on reaching the period of his early youth he was providentially blessed with more advanced instructions in the divine Word in connection with a number of other students under the apostolic professorship of Paul. Referring to both the earlier and the later discipline in Christian knowledge received by Timothy, the Apostle emphatically enjoins as follows: "Continue thou in the things which thou hast learned, and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; and that from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." Evidently this great Apostle was anxious that his spiritual son should feel the ministerial obligation of close adherence to the divine Word to be absolutely imperative. He cared not, nor would have Timothy to be solicitous, for the honor of being ranked among the advanced thinkers of his day. He did not believe that the salvation of the world, or that its movement heavenward, could be accomplished through startling paradoxes and the

striking originality of genius. With him, indeed, the gospel itself, and no beautiful theory about it, or profound philosophy concerning it, "is the power of God unto salvation to every one who believes." From his lofty point of view there was, apparently, about as much power in the cold, pale beams of the moon to quicken the vital forces of nature and cover the face of the earth with the verdure of summer, as there could possibly be in the glittering theories of philosophic dreamers to fill the hungry soul with inspiring thoughts of God and of heaven. No, my brethren, it is only in the salutary sunshine, the enlivening rays of divine truth as coming from "the Sun of Righteousness," which has graciously risen upon the world "with healing in his beams," that regenerative and spiritualizing power can be found in the truth indeed of him who said, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life."

We wonder not, then, at the Apostle's solicitude in his solemn charge to Timothy to "preach the Word" unceasingly and persistently in the face of all who would turn away their ears from the simple gospel in their perverse determination to give heed to useless fables. Instead of teaching this faithful evangelist to yield to any "spirit of the age" in its preference for such fables, the Apostle, on the very account of all such tendencies, urges the more vigorously his son in the faith to "preach the Word in season and out of season" and so to "continue in the things" which he had learned and of which he had been divinely assured. And what does the Apostle indicate as con-

ditionally involved in Timothy's steadfast adherence to the gospel? Nothing less than his own salvation and that of his hearers. Note the following admonitory warning: "Take heed to thyself, and to thy teaching. *Continue in these things; for in doing this thou shalt save both thyself and them that hear thee.*" And in complete harmony with this we have the last solemn appeal to this noble young man: "O Timothy, guard that which is committed unto thee, turning away from the profane babblings and oppositions of the knowledge which is falsely so called; which some professing have erred concerning the faith." What a lesson of warning here for any preacher who, either through a love of his own intellectual dreams, or through a deference to the spirit of any age, would exchange the saving truth of God for the senseless fables of men!

Nor, indeed, was even all this admonitory caution the full measure of the great Apostle's anxiety in this matter. Timothy must not only be faithful himself in a steadfast continuance in the truth which he had received; he must, in his turn, become, as it were, a biblical professor for the impartation of the same religious instruction. "The things," says his inspired instructor, "which thou hast heard from me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also." Here we have, in principle, a college of the Bible, divinely authorized and permanent in the kingdom of God. And we see that in ministerial preparation, a careful training in the fixed principles of the Chris-

tian religion, in the changeless elements of the Truth as it is in Jesus, was unquestionably, in Paul's estimation, the thing of paramount importance. Whatever advantages may accrue from what is called a liberal education, and certainly they are many, yet they are but subordinate and subsidiary to that discipline in "the Word of righteousness" which is absolutely essential to all efficient and successful ministerial effort. The profound study of the classics, the patient exploration of science, philosophy and literature, ancient and modern, may impart a finish to the style and confer both elegance and power of expression, even influencing advantageously the mode of thought; but the power alone that lifts up the soul toward God is found in his divine Word "which liveth and abideth forever." Hence, Timothy was not only required to preach this Word himself, but carefully to commit its unchanging contents to other "faithful men who should be able to teach others also," and thus to perpetuate in the Church a system of biblical instruction.

In all this, however, Timothy was not expected to become a mere imitator of Paul's personal traits as a preacher of the gospel, a servile copyist of the temporary methods of inculcation which he might see fit to employ on this or that occasion. While preaching the same unchangeable truth with unswerving persistence, he was yet to be himself, with the full and free preservation of his own individuality. With absolute oneness as to the matter of preaching, an endless diversity as to all else may characterize the

faithful proclaimers of the divine Word. And here, perhaps, is the proper place to advert to a cavil which might possibly be suggested in this connection. Is it alleged as an objection to the establishment of a regular system of special biblical instruction as a preparatory ministerial course, that the uninspired Timothy and those other uninspired "faithful men" to be taught by him, so as to be "able to teach others also," might possibly mistake their interpretations of the Word for the Word itself and thus propagate their mere opinions to the serious prejudice of all free expansion of soul and broad spiritual culture on the part of those who are taught? If the objection has any force, how did it fail to suggest itself to the mind of the supernaturally guided Apostle while giving the instruction before us? Yet it has been ignorantly alleged against the college of the Bible, whose aim is simply to carry out the principle here divinely inculcated, that in that institution instruction is simply given in interpretations of the Scriptures and that these interpretations are only human opinions. A statement so utterly untrue in both of its assertions could never have been made by any unprejudiced person acquainted in the least degree with the work of the college and its important results. It is a mistake, in the first place, to suppose that an interpretation of a passage is necessarily an opinion of the interpreter, and it is a more serious error to suppose that the instruction given in the college consists, to any degree, in the mere enforcement of anybody's interpretations of Scripture.

Just here it may be necessary to observe that while the vindication in general of the importance of special biblical instruction as the chief element of ministerial preparation is the prime object of this address, it is deemed not inappropriate to refer somewhat in detail to the course of instruction which has been adopted in the college of the Bible for the accomplishment of this important work. And reserving for a moment to subsequent discussion the question of interpretation, let us observe, in the first place, that if the Christian manhood of biblical students is stunted and their ministerial horizon is narrowed by a three years' careful drill in the most wonderful and instructive of all history, including especially the marvelous events of that unique life which transforms in moral beauty the face of humanity, then, indeed, it must be confessed that the college is decidedly consecrated to the stunting and narrowing business. Through the great historic ages of the Old Testament, whose contents consist largely of prophetic incidents as well as prophetic promises, the mind of the student is patiently led to the resplendent dawn of the Christian day "in the fulness of time." We are expressly told that the examples of God's great heroes in those bygone ages are on record "for our instruction upon whom the ends of the world are come." On the completion of this the student enters upon the study of that sublime and profoundly instructive tissue of fact of which the New Testament is chiefly composed. It is here that the full significance of all the past stands clearly revealed before

the mind. Here, under the broad radiance of the great "Light of the world," the whole problem of humanity finds an adequate solution and the dignity of human existence obtains a complete vindication. But these grand results are effected through the imperishable facts of Christian history, not by the inculcation of a religious philosophy. The Bible, as a whole, Old Testament and New, is as remarkable for the great predominance of historic incident embodying divine wisdom, as for the conspicuous absence of philosophic theories, the genuine index of the fallible wisdom of men. Redemption itself, eternal life, reveals itself to men in the tangible form of fact. "The life was manifested," says John, "and we have seen and bear witness and show unto you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested unto us."

This remarkable characteristic of divine revelation is also observable in scriptural statements of Christian doctrine, and even in the biblical proofs of distinct elements of religious truth. Take as a striking instance of the former, the following beautiful passage: "God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom also he made the worlds; who being the effulgence of his glory, and the very image of his substance, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on

high." How much of fact and how little of theory does a simple analysis of this superlatively sublime statement of Christian doctrine disclose! And yet we have herein presented some of the profoundest elements of the Faith. To understand and accept these in the form here divinely given, requires no high degree of training in logic or metaphysics, no superior skill in philosophic or scientific research. We hence clearly discern the divine wisdom by which Paul was directed when, in the face of Grecian philosophy and dialectics, he would know only "the form of sound words" in proclaiming the simple elements of the gospel in all the power of the wonderful facts on which it is based. And this to the great end as he explains, "that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." Hence, too, the divine wisdom of Paul's injunction to Timothy and to all evangelists to "continue in these things" as the condition of their own salvation and that of those to whom they preach.

But it was intimated a moment ago that even the scriptural proof of Christian doctrine consists, not in a theoretical chain of logical inferences, but a series of tangible facts in logical relation with each other. A conspicuous instance appears in the unanswerable argument for the resurrection of the dead presented in the fifteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians. In the first place, the future fact of the resurrection of humanity, the doctrinal point to be established, is shown to be dependent upon, as guaranteed by, the past fact of Christ's resurrection. This, in turn, is

established through the testimony of living witnesses. "He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve, after that of above five hundred brethren at once," etc. Finally the credibility of this last great testimonial fact is made to rest on the martyrdom of the witnesses, willingly endured, in attestation of their testimony. "Why stand we in jeopardy every hour? I protest by that glorying in you, brethren, which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily. If after the manner of men I fought with beasts at Ephesus, what doth it profit me? If the dead are not raised, let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die."

In view, now, of all that has been presented touching the relation of historic incident and historic testimony to Christian truth, the wisdom of any institution in making the study of sacred history the basis of its ministerial course will hardly be questioned. Nor will it be supposed, we presume, that human opinions, or theories of any kind whatever, can have much to do with this most interesting and important study. Should it be alleged, however, that some biblical matters which are not really historic, yet appear in the form of fact and that in the handling of these, at least, there is room for the insinuation of dogmatic influence on the part of an instructor calculated to interrupt the free expansion of the student's powers, if not to lead positively to the adoption of erroneous conclusions for scriptural truth, a satisfactory reply is at hand. So far, indeed, from any exposure to the hazard of this confusion we shall see that the student, when rightly trained, is put in

possession of safe principles of unimpeachable worth which effectually, and even scientifically, if you please, preserve him from the folly of needlessly turning any part of historic truth into mere allegory. But right here we reach the whole question of biblical interpretation, and to a careful consideration of its nature and importance we invite your earnest attention.

Although the study of sacred history lies, as already intimated, at the very basis of the best ministerial preparation, the educational structure reared on this solid foundation cannot be regarded as of any less importance. It is here as in the case of building up the spiritual temple of God; the foundation having been properly laid, "let every man take heed how he builds thereon." And in order to a successful prosecution of this work, a careful training in the application of the unvarying laws of interpretation is altogether indispensable. Hermeneutics is a *science;* and no science can involve a mere process of guesswork. It consists of fixed principles whose authority does not rest upon the unstable basis of opinion. Exegesis is but the application of these universal laws of hermeneutics and the business of an instructor who would faithfully enforce these principles in practical application, could not be said, with any degree of truth, to consist in imparting interpretations of Scripture, but only in practically pointing out the way in which all true interpretations is conducted. If this be faithfully and honestly done there will be little room in the process for the intrusion of

either his own opinions or those of any one else. He may, indeed, pause to drop an opinion where a complete application of the laws of his science seems not to be feasible from the nature of the matter before him, but he leaves the student in full possession of the means of testing the merits of his view whenever a satisfactory application of these principles is available. Not only so, but the student is required to bring to this test the expositions of the ablest exegetes and to reject, without hesitation, every interpretation that cannot abide this application. He is taught to regard all expositions as absolutely worthless, which have no other basis than the mere authority of the exposition. What has authority to do with the changeless principles of any science, or with the legitimate results of their application? He who would accept the solution of a geometrical problem upon the mere authority of Euclid will never master a single branch of mathematical science. Just so the merits of an exposition which is but the solution of an exegetical problem, cannot be determined by the weight of great names, but must ever be tested by a severe application of the inflexible laws of hermeneutics.

Judge now and decide; is this a work which involves the mere enforcement of one's own interpretations, and are students who are thus carefully trained liable to be warped in mental action by dogmatic influences flowing from the opinions of their instructors? The very opposite of this is the truth in the case, and we here distinctly take the ground, with

all confidence, that the kind of training here indicated as the intellectual discipline to which students are subjected in the college of the Bible is requisite to the highest development of their manhood as serving to prevent their falling unduly under the influence of some gifted and admired teacher and thus imbibing his opinions and theories without the culture necessary for the determination of their merits. For among the principles of hermeneutics diligently enforced, are not only objective laws, but subjective conditions in the absence of which the task of the interpreter cannot be safely and successfully executed. The states of mind under which one may undertake the work of exposition will materially influence the results. And of the necessary mental conditions on the part of every exegete, freedom manifestly takes rank among the very foremost in importance. Freedom, we repeat with special emphasis, is absolutely indispensable in all interpretation, that the possession of truth may be the seeker's reward. Freedom, primarily, from himself, from every false bias and misleading predilection. Freedom from his own intellectual vagaries and all unsound latitudinarian tendencies. Freedom, indeed, from the seductive influence of a freedom falsely so called. Let us not be deceived by words. Among "the idols of the market," described by Lord Bacon, we may reckon, I think, a false image of liberty fashioned by a vagrant rationalism and erected as a true object of devotion. Sober interpretation has nothing in common with the crude speculations and

fanciful expositions often heard from the pulpit. Far different from this is the mental freedom of which hermeneutics, as a science, takes cognizance. In approaching the Word of God that we may understand the import of his sublime communications to men, we are free from everything but truth itself and those eternal laws under whose regulation alone it may be safely sought. And when, under the certain guidance of these, we reach definite results, we are still free in the enjoyment of our rich possessions from the dogmatic influence of every mind that may have united in the pursuit. In other words, it is truth itself, and no man's mere view of the matter, that constitutes the treasure in hand. To illustrate by a single instance among a multitude adducible: When a student alone, or with the aid of an instructor, through the application of the laws of hermeneutics, reaches the conclusion that the contrast in 2 Cor. 5 : 7, is not between faith and the sensuous sight of things here as commonly supposed, but between faith and the glorious sight of heavenly objects to be enjoyed hereafter, and that, consequently, faith is not in this antithesis the higher but the lower principle of action, he arrives under the sure guidance of these laws at the actual knowledge of truth itself and not at the opinion of any interpreter as to the teaching of the divine Word in this case. The development of the contrast in the light of the context sets the seal of absolute certainty upon the conclusion here stated.

See, now, in conclusion, the vantage ground on

which he stands who has subjected himself to the discipline here indicated—ground which stands equally aloof from dogmatic authority, on the one hand, and from rationalistic licentiousness on the other. If there be, as there is indeed, a veritable science embodying fixed principles of interpretation, universally obligatory, then the imperious and presumptuous demand of Rome that the individual understanding and conscience be absolutely surrendered to her despotic control, and that her voice, and that only, be recognized as an authoritative interpreter of the divine Word, must ever be looked upon as equally truthless and senseless. Even the inspired exegesis of an apostle or a prophet could only be regarded as needful in those exceptional cases where the laws of interpretation are not fully available, as in prophetic and unfulfilled intimations of future events. And if any one claiming to be inspired should plainly set at naught these principles and require the acceptance of his decisions upon the sole basis of authority, we should be justified in rejecting, as false and absurd, his pretensions to supernatural guidance. The exegetical trifling by which Romish interpretations are often characterized, of which some rare specimens could be adduced, demonstrates most conclusively the reverse of infallibility. Divine intelligence itself could never harmonize the ridiculous with the infallible. No pretended authority, indeed, can command our intellectual homage at the expense of any principle which vindicates for itself the eternal force of truth. Even the Savior in his

references to the Scriptures recognized and acted upon the law of biblical harmony which is but one of the fundamental principles of interpretation. Compare his mode of handling the Word of God in his replies, to the great tempter.

But the argument by which Rome seeks to enforce her false and foolish claim to dogmatic authority is no less void of common sense. The right of individual interpretation must be refused and the supposed need of authoritative exposition must be recognized on the alleged ground that the exercise of the former would lead, of necessity, to endless diversity of views in religion and to the wildest extravagances of rationalism. By thus artfully confounding individual interpretation with a lawless handling of the divine Word, Rome perpetrates a fraud to hide the iniquity of her claims. Her fallacious argument and the false claim supported by it are alike based upon the truthless supposition that no such thing exists as a science of interpretation embodying fixed principles by which all are to be equally governed and directed. On the other hand, the very existence of this science is of itself a complete refutation of both the impudent claim and the argument on which it is founded. For the observance of hermeneutical laws is a safeguard against exegetical lawlessness. The faithful application of these principles excludes as much the possibility of latitudinarian interpretation as it does all need of authoritative exposition. No student of the Bible, indeed, is under the necessity of choosing between human dictation, on the one hand,

and the reckless excesses of free-thinking on the other. Grounding his procedure upon the eternal laws under the application of which the Bible becomes its own interpreter, he enjoys a freedom of thought, indeed, as unaffected by the demands of unreasonable dogmatists, but a freedom which is, nevertheless, regulated and sanctified by the wholesome influence of imperishable principles. His freedom is only a freedom to know, to receive, and to love, with the whole strength of his soul, the saving truth of God as revealed in all its fulness through Jesus Christ our Lord. Such, my brethren, is the exalted position to which, by the help of God, we strive to elevate the student of the Holy Scriptures in the College of the Bible.

FREEDOM IN CHRIST.

BY J. A. LORD.

The price of liberty is the price of blood. It is the hope of every slave and the rarest treasure of every freeman. It is an unseen good, worth more to man than all his tangible possessions. Life is not counted dear in its defense. With it the scantiest fare and veriest hovel is to be desired rather than plenty and a palace in the livery of kings. What makes the soldier a hero is battling for this idea—not for his own life but that liberty may be vindicated and his children may be free. But battling with the eye of the world on him, country, home and friends nerve his heart and sharpen his sword for the conflict. His motives are an exalted selfishness in which the highest of the base and the lowest of the best in man unite in the result. His ideal is but the preparation for a higher liberty, not gained on the field of battle, but in the spiritual struggles of the soul. Its warfare is not waged to defend earthly ties and interests. To give up houses and lands and friends is the test of its supremest victory. Its victor is not crowned with laurels but with thorns; and, for fame and eulogy and triumphal arch, he has the brand of the heretic, the curse of the multitude and the uplifted cross. He dies not for himself, but that this enemies may be free.

The freedom that Christ gives is soul freedom. He dreamed of no earthly republic, and wrote no treatise on the rights of man. He stormed the citadel of bondage, leaving lesser men to subdue the outposts. He put into the soul the leaven which has been working for eighteen centuries in all the directions of man's vested rights. And when the true statue of liberty is raised, when the last man is freed from the last oppression, when the broad base is laid in guaranteed civil and religious rights, when on every face and corner of the mighty structure are the names of earth's liberators; then by the acclamation of a free humanity will the Christ stand above all, the colossal character of the ages, the hero of perfected liberty. But the world must await his monument, there is yet no pedestal worthy of Jesus of Nazareth.

Every being has its sphere in which alone it is free. The mole in the ground, the deer on the plain and the bird in the air is each free because dwelling in the sphere of its needs and highest activity. The soul has its sphere. It lives in the truth. All truth is the realm of mind. Religion has suffered from the ignorant zeal of its advocates. The theologian talks of divine and inspired truth as though there is truth whose impulse came not from God. But the problems which the advancing thought of man could solve, Jesus passed by. He addressed himself to the problems of the conscience. He is the Sun that dispels the clouds about the summit of life. He is the conservation of all truth—the helmsman of the homeward-bound bark of human life, deep-

laden with thought from a hundred earthly ports.

All truth is first in persons, for truth is thought, thought is the product of mind, and mind is person. The mind of God projected the truth we see in heaven and earth. But there is a truth of mind which cannot be expressed in matter—which no arithmetic can compute nor chemistry detect. The will, conscience, intuitions, love, duty, the universal unrest; in short the moral faculties are in the nature of mind and their truths inhere in all minds more or less darkened by tradition and sin. The whole moral truth is in Jesus. He is the incarnation of educated will, enlightened conscience, untainted intuition, faultless duty and perfect love. He answers the questions of the soul as to origin, nature and destiny. The gospel abounds in type and metaphor at this point. He is the way, the truth and the life; the word, the light and the sun; the shepherd, the door and the sheepfold; the prophet, the priest and the king; the altar, the sacrifice and the passover; the rock, the vine and the uplifted serpent, and the power, the wisdom and the grace of God.

When certain would follow him, he says, "If you continue in my word, then are you my disciples, and you shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free; and if the Son make you free, you are free indeed." In him is the life of God which dwells by nature in the soul of man. The infancy and boyhood of Jesus refute "original sin." He grew in wisdom and favor with God and man. He often appeals from the false education of his opposers

to their innate sense of right, the light which every man receives at his earthly advent. The frosts of time, the gales of lust, and the mildew of doubt may so mar the grown plant of human life, that a barbarous theology will say that all this is the nature of man, and that the coffined sinner is the fitting end of the cradled infant. This is blaming God's seed for man's miserable culture. Even to call the soul a blank at birth is calling the acorn a blank because the oak is not yet ours. Christ came to foster and develop our birthright. He makes the child the measuring unit of the kingdom of heaven.

The freedom which Christ gives is the freedom of life. Such was his vigor that no lust or doubt could dwarf or disturb him. Like some mighty cedar of Lebanon standing where all the winds of heaven blow, firmer rooted from its trial, larger limbed from the exercises of adversity, the life within undisturbed by the tumult without, and every leaf spread to catch the sunlight of heaven—while weaker trees lay prostrate and rent; so Jesus stood, the fibres of his soul taking deeper root in human nature with every new experience, his character stronger with each succeeding conflict, his life far removed from the petty ambitions of men, and his open vision catching every thought from the Infinite wisdom and love—amid the ruin of sin and death he stood in life and perfect righteousness. The steps which lead to the dungeon are lust and sin and death. To lead up from this to the liberty of the gospel, Christ places faith and righteousness and life. Life is liberty. Where it

reigns supreme is no bondage. Eden and Heaven are other names for different types of perfect liberty. Death is bondage. The work of Satan is to destroy life and bring in the reign of chaos and death. The mission of Jesus is to destroy him who had the power of death—the devil. The significance of liberty in Christ is life, and from this summit may be viewed all the features of our glorious heritage. The past, the present and the future is the scope of our vision—answering to freedom from sin, freedom from the letter and freedom from fear.

I. FREEDOM FROM SIN.

Sin is the essential slavery. To be free from it is to be free indeed. In a midnight dungeon Paul rejoiced while his jailer, though a Roman citizen, turned to the Lord's freeman for deliverance from the bondage of sin. Lust stands to sin as the man-stealer to African slavery. It binds us captive and sells us to sin. The first work of Jesus is to put our captor in bonds and bring him to punishment. He crucifies the flesh with the affections and lusts. Paul puts it in the form of personal experience: "I delight in the law of God after the inner man, but I see another law in my members bringing me in subjection to the law of sin. Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? God through Christ will deliver me. The law of the mind is weak; the law of the flesh is strong; and the strong must rule." To reverse the result, Christ renews the mind—strengthens it with might by his spirit in the inner man. With

this strength we keep the body under and let the spirit reign. This is a life-long struggle. The outer must be crucified and the inner man renewed day by day. Literally, Christ furnishes us with new motives and ideals, and with these we can do all things through Him who strengthens us.

But with strength for the present there must be forgetfulness for the past. The ghosts of old sins must not rise up to hinder our joy in the new life. Our lustful captor is in bondage, but the Master to whom we were sold claims us for his own and we cannot deny his right. Our hands hold not the price of ransom; but with the precious blood of Jesus we have received our redemption—the forgiveness of sins. To enjoy this redemption we must be in Christ—in his death. This is effected by faith in his blood—baptism into his death. Having thus obeyed from the heart we are made free from sin. The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made us free from the law of sin and death.

II. Freedom from the Letter.

The key to the meaning of freedom from the Letter is Life. The Letter kills but the Spirit gives life. It is a superficial treatment that would call the Law, letter, and the Gospel, spirit, then regard the Gospel but as an improved law. This is making the Gospel only a new letter and its commands as much carnal ordinances as the meats and drinks of the Law. In this way the ordinances, a part of the system of life, become death to many; their conception of baptism

smothering piety as effectually as the outward obedience of the Jew. It is mechanical to say that the words of the Law are letter, and the words of the Gospel, spirit. Something in the one makes the whole system letter and something in the other makes the whole system spirit. The Law came by Moses, but Grace and Truth by Jesus Christ. The Law is true but not the Truth. It is the relative truth of letter while the Gospel is the absolute truth of spirit. The truth that Moses spake was apart from his life; it was above Moses who was the finger of God to write the Letter on tables of stone. The truth that Christ spake was in his life, not in propositions. It came out of his own spirit and was the product of his own experience. Hence he says, "My words are spirit and they are life." They were uttered, not in the form of law, but in accents of love and throbbing with life. The laws of God in Christ are written in our hearts—the tables of the new covenant. These laws are not the words, but the life of Jesus within us, enabling us to speak as he spake so far as that life is ours. According to 2 Corinthians, and third chapter, what is written in our hearts is Christ himself, who is here called the Spirit of the Living God; and where the spirit of the Lord is there is liberty. To the Galatians, who were going back to the Letter, days and ceremonies, Paul says, "I am afraid of you lest I have bestowed labor upon you in vain. I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you." Only in a secondary sense can the writings of the Apostles be called the

New Testament. Strictly these writings are an outgrowth of the New Testament as much as the Old Testament was an outgrowth of the Ten Commandments. The laws of the New Covenant were put into the hearts and minds of men who have spoken and written as the spirit of Christ's life gave them utterance. The true preservation of these laws is not in holy orders and venerable manuscripts, but in the leavening power of the renewed life. The things which we have seen and heard and learned in saintly men we are to teach others also.

The Letter is a formulation of certain truths; the Spirit is an incarnation of all. The Letter points out righteousness and condemns the sinner; the Spirit manifests righteousness and helps the sinner. No Letter—that is no formulation—could express the meaning of "the Word made flesh" dwelling among us. This is the great mystery of godliness. It transcends all speech. He is human life, not destroyed, but transformed by the life of God. Law can no more define his life, or prescribe his conduct, than geometric lines can picture the green and living earth, or shape the glory of the opening flower. And as is Christ, so also are they who are his. For they all, as with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from the glory of the Letter to the higher glory of life. It is life in us, and not law over us, that makes for righteousness. We are free because moved from within. We do our own will and God works in us to will and to do of his own good pleasure. No

letter, no law, can make free, for it rules from without; and whatever rules from without cannot give freedom. The only sense in which we are under law is in that meaning of law which defines it as the mode by which any power works, the orderly expression of any nature. Christ is our law, but Christ is life, and life is liberty. Love, joy and peace are the fruits of that life and against such there is no law. Our whole activity is on the highest plane. Faith working by love makes every burden a joy and every duty praise. Our relations are changed. No longer servants of sin under the condemnation of a cumbrous letter; we have become sons of God and heirs with Christ under the perfect law of liberty. All things are ours, and we are Christ's, and Christ is God's. The privileges of our freedom are as multiform as life itself. Among these is,

1. *Growth in the truth.* Many believe they can as accurately define the parables of Jesus as they can the precepts of Moses. Their knowledge of Christ is bounded by exegetical criticism. In their thinking are no unsettled questions. Their pictures have no perspective—the prudential instruction about woman as a teacher is as important as the Sermon on the Mount. One of the most eminent of this class made what Dr. Holland called the sad confession that he had never changed—that the opinions and religious formulas of his youth were the boundaries of his mature life. Their trouble is in making the New Testament a new letter. God spoke in times past by the mouth of his prophets; He speaks now

by the life of His Son. No book can contain that life. Our common interpretation, that the closing statement of John's gospel is hyperbole, is a tame one. Does it not rather compliment our understanding of the apostle of love, to say that, when his spirit caught the meaning of the far-reaching impulse of Christ's words and deeds, their infinite application to human conduct and illumination of human thought, their limitless growth in human experience, he saw that the world could not contain the books if all this were written? The Spirit promised the disciples was to guide them into all truth. A man instructed in the kingdom of heaven is like a house-holder who brings forth from his treasury things new and old. The Word is the seed of the kingdom that will unfold thirty, sixty and a hundred fold as the soil of the heart is enriched to develop it. We hear of the crystallization of truth, but only dead truth can crystallize. The Law may be a crystal, but the Gospel is seed. What is written is but a part of what was in the hearts of the disciples and less of what was in Christ. The New Testament is incidental and fragmentary, therefore the more precious. Jesus left no system of theology, and no instruction as to the preservation of His teaching other than that His disciples should go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. The church is to be the fulness of Christ and here the glory of God is to be manifest through Him in all ages. "Where the Bible speaks we speak, and where the Bible is silent we are silent," is true only with much qualifying. We speak when Christ

speaks; and when the heart, cultured in humility and love, sees the principles of His life harmonizing with whatsoever things are pure, lovely and of good report. There is force in what the extremes of Romanism and Quakerism affirm in common—the bringing in of new truth other than that which is written. The mistake of the one, however, is to have this come through an artificial waiting for the Spirit, and of the other in the resultant letter of church controversies and councils. The individual and universal Christian consciousness and experience have been enriching our thought in all ages with much that is not written, but with nothing which is not in Christ. There is something which seems to be the united current of a myriad rills—the blended and majestic thought of humanity, often called the Spirit of the Age, but which, in spite of back currents of conservatism, whirlpools of license, and the tinge of some turbid torrents, I venture to call the Spirit of Christ bearing us on with greater depth and volume and placidity to the ocean of absolute truth.

The doctrine of spiritual illumination is involved here. In our modern mania for explaining everything, we have classified the offices of the Holy Spirit into miraculous and ordinary, and made them generically different. An unbiased examination of the twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth chapters of First Corinthians, with many other passages, would make it very difficult to support this classification. There is no such sharp distinction drawn by the apostle. He traces every manifestation to a common

source—to all being by one Spirit baptized into one body and all made to drink into one Spirit. True, he speaks of the suspension of the miraculous, but the very terms of his statement indicate not a difference of kind, but of degree. Whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease: whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away; for we know in part and we prophesy in part; but when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away; like the dawn which blends with and is lost in the perfect day. And what the imperfect gifts over which the Corinthians quarreled was to the infant church, that and more is Faith, Hope and Love, to the growing church of to-day in leading it to the perfection in Christ.

2. We are free to recognize and appropriate truth wherever found. Believers are sometimes disturbed by the charge of skeptics, that much of what is found in the Gospel was known by older teachers than Christ. They have been reluctant to admit this, deeming such an admission a confession of weakness for Christianity. They are like the disciples who forbade a certain man to cast out demons because he followed not after them. Jesus had no such jealous spirit. "Forbid him not," he says, "for he who is not against me is for me." The glory of Christ is not in exclusiveness; he stands surrounded by a galaxy of moral teachers whose partial truths emphasized the need for a greater teacher. They could prepare the material, like

David and Hiram of old, but to Jesus the glory of building the temple was given. God had been speaking to other men besides sons of Abraham. The wise men who came from the East to Bethlehem had been waiting for the kingdom of God, and the Gentile Melchizedec furnished the loftiest type of Christ. The supremacy of Jesus remains in this: what others saw dimly he saw clearly, and what they regarded apart from life was wrought out in the thought and deed and sacrifice of the Nazarene. Christians, then, are not men of one book, but of one life, whose first manifestation is seen in primitive prophet and lawgiver, Indian sage, Persian magi and Greek poet, but whose perfection is in Jesus of Nazareth, the light and life of the world.

3. *Freedom from uniformity.* Uniformity is the ritualist's counterfeit for unity and the sectary's apology for not heeding the Savior's prayer. It is the Janus-faced deity of a divided Protestantism, telling the ritually inclined that conformity is unity, and the spiritually inclined that they have unity without agreement in the Gospel requirements. It is a curious phase of religious life which recognizes that freedom from conformity outside of one's own denominational lines comports with spiritual unity; while freedom within is the mark of unsoundness, and is made the subject of ecclesiastical complaint and censure. This confusion of thought is presumptive evidence that Protestantism has yet to learn what is the unity Christ gives and the liberty into which he brings us. There must be unity of faith in one body, which is

unity of life; but with this may be the widest diversity of individual development. Acorns falling from the same oak, sink into the same soil, are warmed by the same sun, and develop the same life. But what infinite variety do we behold! Not a limb or leaf on one is the exact counterpart of anything on the other. So the sun of God's love shines into human souls, developing the same life in all. God is working in Peter, Paul and John, Luther, Calvin and Wesley and Campbell, Stone and Scott; but it is along the lines of each life. What each preaches is the Gospel of Christ, but it is the gospel of Peter or Paul as well. The church needs every class of talent, as the body needs every member. Some may seem as superfluous as a patch on the face of beauty; yet even it may teach, by contrast, the power of beauty. Let our charity be large wherever the life of Christ is seen; and whether weak or strong, let us receive our brother without regard to his opinions.

The ritualist's plea for uniformity is a plea for death. It is the primness of a Dutch garden, the constraint of a Chinese shoe. It makes every skull after the same pattern and furnishes, ready-made, the phrases and tones of a finished theology. Its devil is originality. Its god is fashioned at Rome, Augsburg, Geneva or Westminster. It is the modern Dianna of the Ephesians, whose craftsmen multiply her shrines with profit, and whose devotees use their lungs in her defense. It is deified machinery, crystallized devotion and measured praise. It boasts like an Egyptian mummy of respectability, preservation

and age. It is the great command of the fossil's law and the virtue which hides even a Pharisee's sins. It pierced the Savior with sorrow and crept in to destroy the triumphant church. Great is uniformity, but it is the greatness of dullness, the genius of death. May we never be entangled with its yoke of bondage.

4. *Freedom in the use of means.* Assimilation and adaptability are qualities of life and the privilege of freemen. We are called unto liberty; and the only limitations are the inherent ones of love—first, not to use our liberty for lust, and second, by love to serve one another. This service, by the way, does not mean to yield to every whim that my brother or a conscientious minority majority may contend for. Healthy, good-humored opposition would be the best service we could render many who have been troubling the churches with a total misconception of the law of meats, and in the fourteenth chapter of Romans. We may use everything not inherently evil for righteousness—for the glory of God and the salvation of man. The meek shall inherit the earth; but hitherto their meekness has been of such a narrow type that they have seen little else than Satan in the opportunities which art, science and society have brought to their hand. Of course we must test all things and hold fast the good. The veriest conservative in religion partially recognizes this assimilative power of spiritual life. Catalogue expedients and he will be found using some while rejecting others. We may expect to find him going as far as

meeting-houses, stipulated salaries, Sunday-schools, hymn-books, tuning-forks, and sound religious newspapers—his book of expedients being larger or smaller than the above will depend on temperament and tradition. This is childish. It is neither Letter nor Spirit. It has not the definiteness of the one or the liberty of the other. Ours is a great busy world, full of sin it is true, but also full of grace, beauty and a growing culture. In fighting the sins of the world, it is a fatal mistake to array all that is not sinful against us. There is no spiritual power in ignorance, or moral quality in ugliness. The Shaker's garb and the cheerless church are not symbols of the Gospel. The beauty of soul it gives is rather symbolized in the growing plant, the fragrant flower, pleasing architecture and inspiring music. The conservative may have spiritual life, but it is life under unfavorable conditions, which is never the largest life. Napoleon gained his victories because his opponents fought according to tradition. New methods of attack, unheard of forced marches and winter campaigns were so obviously heretical in the light of all military precedents, that soundness in the military faith would not permit them to meet him on his own ground. It was better to be orthodox than victorious. The Gospel is not the manifestation of an inorganic force pulling in but one direction; rather, it is the power of an eager life laying hold of all things in all ways to further its ends. A life

> "Whose tongue is framed to music,
> And his hand is armed with skill,

Whose face is the mould of beauty,
And his heart the throne of will."

5. *Conservation of Liberty.* This spontaneousness of power, this assimilation of life, this largeness of liberty in Christ, harmonize with the strictest faithfulness in the gospel. License in doctrine, like license in conduct, is an abuse of liberty fatal to its existence. We are free in thought and deed only as our lives are developed in the Divine life. Out of Christ there is no liberty. The Cross is the power in the Gospel, the culmination of God's grace. To preach anything different is to substitute weakness for strength. The ordinances are the most fitting expression for the great gospel facts—the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. To substitute water for wine would destroy the significance of the sacred feast. To sprinkle water on the believer for burying the believer in water equally destroys the meaning of the initial ordinance of the new life. To assert that there is no faith without the ordinances intact would subject one to the charge of sectarian bigotry; but it would do no violence to charity to say that the most appropriate expression of the faith is lost by a change of the form.

Under all religions the need for objective expression of the faith within has asserted itself in ordinances. The efforts to reject symbols have been so few and so weak that they but emphasize the common impulse of humanity. They are swept away like the barriers of sand thrown up by children against the rising waves. The claim that because of

liberty the gospel requirements may be changed or multiplied is based on two postulates; first, that the expression of faith is a matter of taste; and, second, that the ordinances are the ritual part of the gospel. In answer to the first, it may be said that while the faith remains unchanged it will be safe to give primary expression to the same in the forms elected by Jesus. And the fact that all substitutes lack the simplicity and expressiveness which make the ordinances beautiful, should cause every man of faith to hesitate before contenting himself with what has for authority only centuries of tradition, and for scriptural basis a misconception of the Law of Liberty.

The common belief that baptism is ritual, is made the ground of liberty in modifying the same. The ground is wrong. Baptism is not a work of law, not legal obedience. It is the washing of regeneration and the obedience of faith; either of which facts takes it out of the realm of Law and places it under the realm of Faith. Our baptism does not belong to a category different from our faith; for baptism into Christ is given as a reason for our being sons of God by faith. It is not a "positive law." It is the privilege of faith. What hindereth me from being baptized? If thou believest thou mayest.

III. Freedom from Fear.

Fear is a diseased vision. It comes from darkness and imperfect light. It magnifies dangers and distorts events. It made the spies sent out by Moses

deem the Canaanites giants and themselves grasshoppers in their sight. And the slander of their fear was more potent with the Israelites than the true report of Caleb and Joshua. Forty years of wandering intervened because there were not enough brave hearts to go up and possess the land. Fear makes the Catholic see sin in Friday's meat and virtue in feasts and holy days. It canonizes the commonplace in Protestant pulpits, and hinders many from preaching the truth which their heart and brain approve. It stultified the genius of Galileo at the bidding of an ignorant priest; and makes for one hundred and ninety-five millions of our fellow-beings the infirm old man of the Tiber the infallible mouthpiece of the infinite God. It disturbs the peace of the world. With its ghostly tales it terrorized our common childhood, so that in the gathering twilight each stump and tree was a goblin of evil, and night the cage of every horrible form. It has been the infirmity of noble minds and the religion of the ignorant and weak. It is the nest of superstition, the justifier of absurdity, and the explanation of every fantastic creed which has disgraced and duped humanity. It scaled the heavens and grouped the stars in the creations of a diseased fancy, and not the telescopes of Ross and Herschel could erase the names which fear had written in the sky.

But there is a fear overshadowing all others—the fear that disturbs the mother as she bends in worship over her fevered child, that lurks by every fireside, grasps the hand in regretful parting, is the worm in

every rose and the skeleton at every feast;—the fear of death that laughed to scorn all philosophy, saddened the happiest poems, darkened the brightest hopes and made human life a funeral march from the cradle to the grave. It was the monarch of universal empire from Adam to Christ, the master of all servants and the ruler of all kings. It made the instinct of immortality speak like

> "An infant crying in the night,
> And with no language but a cry.

The voices that came from the grave were as the random words which the Atlantic sent back over its broken cable.

But one came walking among the tombs of four thousand years without fear. There was no law of death for him. "I am the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob," spake the oracle at the burning bush. "He is not the God of the dead but of the living," said Jesus in reply to the Sadducees. "I am the resurrection and the life," are the calm words at the tomb of Lazarus. Death to him was the portal to a more glorious temple. Undaunted he presents himself the victim at the last Passover. With fearful hearts his disciples follow from afar as he bears his cross, and in their rayless grief lay him in the garden sepulchre. Death has taken away the Shepherd and the flock is scattered. The light of his marvellous life will be in their sky for a season; but it is the light of a setting sun. The early morning after the Sabbath found them bringing spices to the sepulchre, but their sweet perfume told of a love without hope,

the saddest of earthly affections. Heavier than the stone at the grave is the weight on their hearts, and he was nerveless and still who alone could roll it away. But God never willed that such love as theirs should lie embalmed in any sepulchre. The power of his own matchless love had been evoked to vindicate the love of these disciples, and the Magdalene bent over an empty tomb. Yet their eyes were holden. The law of death lay heavy upon them and suggested every explanation but the one for which he had prepared them. "They have taken away my Lord and I know not where they have laid them," is the cry of a fresh grief. The heart craves certainty; it would know where even the rent body is laid.

Such a mighty work as delivering man from the fear of death could not be effected by a negation. Christianity is built, not on an empty tomb, but on a risen Lord. And when the re-born Savior stood in the pathway, there came the regeneration of a new hope swallowing up all despair of life and delivering them who, through fear of death, had been all their lifetime subject to bondage. No longer led by the spirit of bondage to fear, they have received the spirit of adoption, whereby they can cry, "Abba, Father," over the tomb of loved ones and in the last hours of the bitterest agony. With a courage which nothing in their former lives could explain, they boldly declare the Resurrection. Not the tradition of Jew, wisdom of Greek, nor power of Rome, could resist this demonstrated doctrine of a future life. Life is proven stronger than death. Love now is the

king of life, battering down the strongholds of superstition and making rapid strides toward the new universal empire where perfect love will cast out all fear. There will be an Eden which no tempter can enter, and a tree of life which no knowledge of good and evil can destroy. Then will be brought to pass the saying, "Death is swallowed up in victory. The sting of Death is Sin, and the strength of Sin is the Law; but thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

"THE SPIRIT OF THE AGE."

BY O. A. CARR.

This charming phrase, "THE SPIRIT OF THE AGE," is quite popular, and is sometimes intelligible. The word "*Spirit*" we may apprehend, and we may know what is meant by "*Age*" (*aion*, I take it, not *Kosmos*), and yet "the *Spirit of the Age*" is to be guessed at.

Of all the influences of thought and of feeling and of selfish interest at work in society, the strongest is meant, whether it can be named or not.

To say in a broad, general, sweeping way that the Spirit of the Age is progressive, or utilitarian, or superstitious, or selfish, is not saying very much. It may be any, or all of these, since they do not conflict, and are not necessarily distinct. In that case it would only be necessary to get a *broad* term that would designate all of these forces acting together—all of these currents running into one. But then there is no special virtue in being *broad* unless you are also *thick*. "A *broad view*" is of little use unless you see something—in short, each of you may see different and differing forces in the complicated machinery of our civilization, and each may say that in his view, his conception, big as a mountain, is the controlling power, and each may name it for himself, *the Spirit of the Age*, and I shall not quarrel with

you. In truth, I should not seriously object to your deciding by ballot who is right, for I have no fear that you, in so deciding, would have so much of *a* spirit of the age as to use bribery.

As for me, I must fetch a compass and steer definitely, for I intend that the happy, doubtful phrase shall designate the speech I make, and also what I am convinced the phrase, *Spirit of the Age*, ought to mean.

Then, I say, the "Spirit of the Age" is —— ah, you see I must eliminate, for I am talking of the religious spirit only. And, within this boundary, I do not mean that which for the present may control the greatest number of people, who could hardly be said to have any spirit at all, excepting that of indolent satisfaction with the form of religion fashioned and handed down to them. I mean the spirited ones, who think, and who are concerned about what they believe and do.

"The Spirit of the Age" is —— remember that I am not considering politics, or human government in any form, or science, or art, or literature as such; *but religion;* and then all of these as they are affected by religion, and as they, in turn, affect religion. Then, understand me, I aver that the "Spirit of the Age," religiously, is . . . . . well, now, I am not afraid to say it—it is

DISREGARD FOR AUTHORITY.

I suspect that this is a general truth, characteristic of our nation politically, but upon this I have no wish

to dwell. It is likely, however, that the disregard for authority in government (a kind of Democracy, or Republicanism, if you please, run mad and let loose in the home, in the state, and in the nation) has made possible, and has fostered the *disregard for authority in religion*. Freedom of thought and of speech makes licentiousness possible.

The justness of my conclusion, and the truth of my proposition, may be more readily seen in the light of development of influences that have contributed to our age and have helped to make it what it is.

"*By what authority doest thou these things, who gave thee this authority?*" This was the original question. It implied a doubt as to whether our Savior had any authority. It was tantamount to asking: "Is Jesus Divine?" The answer to this was the answer as to the authority. The only other question was: Did he who has all authority say this, or that? If so, it was sufficient for those who confessed Jesus. Such found all authority needed, or demanded, in "*thus saith the Lord.*" At the introduction of Christianity, so jealously was this one question of authority guarded that those who rejected the words of apostles and prophets clothed with miraculous power, were told that they resisted the Holy Spirit, and that in so doing they rejected Jesus and God. *To the Jews* there was this revelation: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spoke in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, has in these latter days spoken unto us by his Son." Heb. 1:1, 2. As certainly as God spoke to Moses,

so certainly has he spoken to you, through Jesus the Christ; and as they escaped not who refused Moses, neither can you escape if you turn away from him who speaks to you from heaven. Just as God spoke with authority through Moses, so with authority does he speak through Christ to you; and as they who despised Moses' law perished, "how can you escape if you neglect so great salvation?" Moses was head over that Jewish house, Christ over his own house—whose house ye are.

To the Gentiles there was, in revelation, the same guarding of authority. The Holy Spirit is able to reveal the will of God, and was given for that purpose. "God hath revealed to us (said Paul) these things by his Spirit that searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God; which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teaches, but which the Holy Spirit teaches," (1 Cor. 2: 10-13) and "if any among you be spiritual let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the *commandments of the Lord.*" 1 Cor. 14: 37. Thus to Jew and Gentile, authority was in the word spoken, or, "in the document," if you please, because from Jesus who has all authority. To those who rejected it there was nothing else given.

The necessity for a revelation from on high—an authoritative utterance—that men might know the truth, is seen in the long struggle of the Greek mind in search of a criterion, something that could be relied upon. This struggle continued after the gospel began to be preached. In their wisdom the

Greeks called the gospel foolishness, and in their foolishness they rejected the revelation of the Spirit—the only source from which the wisdom they needed could be derived. Their wonderful ability to reason out everything had failed long before the gospel era, and had landed some of the most gifted Greeks in despair. "What is truth?" was asked by more than Pilate, and, seemingly, with the idea that truth bore authority within itself, before which the Greek would bow, but, alas, he could not find it. Anaxagoras had plaintively exclaimed: "Nothing can be known, nothing can be learned, nothing can be certain, sense is limited, intellect is weak, life is short." Parmenides declared that the very constitution of man prevents him from ascertaining absolute truth. Empedocles affirmed that "all philosophical and religious systems must be unreliable because we have no criterion by which to test them." Pyrrho said: "We have no criterion of truth." His followers said: "We assert nothing, no, not even that we assert nothing." The general conclusion to which Greek philosophy led was this: "We can not distinguish the true from the false, and such is the imperfection of reason that we cannot affirm the correctness of any philosophical deduction." It is strange that, in Paul's day, the Greeks made up their minds sufficiently to say that the gospel is foolishness! It was not reasonable to them.

Christianity as a moral force, designed to bend the world, was itself liable to be bent. It was sadly bent even at the dawn of the third century of the Chris-

tian era by the yielding to the Greek in his wisdom and by the introduction of show and ceremony to win the rude barbarians who would not be conquered by preaching Jesus and him crucified.

To quiet dissensions, and to obtain some authoritative expression, some criterion of truth, assemblies for consultation were held which eventually took the form of councils, and in the fourth century their dictates became compulsory and were enforced by civil power, by authority of the emperor. Mosheim says of these councils: "There was nothing to exclude the ignorant from ecclesiastical preferment, the illiterate, who looked upon all learning, particularly philosophy, as pernicious to piety, were increasing. The will of the councils was determined by a majority vote, and to secure that all manner of intrigues and impositions were resorted to. The council of Nice had scarcely adjourned when it was evident that as a means of determining a criterion of truth such councils were a failure. Still the decree of a council was, to those not incorrigible, the authority." "It was an act of virtue to deceive and lie when by that means the interests of the church might be promoted; and the errors in religion when maintained and adhered to after proper admonition were punishable with civil penalties and bodily tortures." And this was believed simply because so decreed by council in the fourth century! "Doctrines were considered established by the number of martyrs that professed them, by miracles (so called), and by the confession of lunatics. Ordeal tribunals were resorted to as criteria of

truth that the people might have some authority in believing. An accused man sinks or swims when thrown into a pond of water. He is burnt, or escapes unharmed when he holds a piece of red-hot iron in his hand." These criteria of truth!

To withstand the flood of impiety the Papal Government established two institutions: *The Inquisition* and the *Auricular Confession*. The essence of these as authorities was thus expressed: "We must believe without examination and then afterward we can endeavor to understand what we have thus believed." Cajetan said to Luther: "Thou must believe that one single drop of Christ's blood is sufficient to redeem the whole race, and the remaining quantity that was shed was left as a legacy to the Pope to be a treasure from which indulgences were to be drawn." Indulgences were the immediate inciting cause of the Reformation; but very soon there came into sight the real principle that was animating the controversy. It lay in the question: "Does the Bible owe its authenticity to the Church, or does the Church owe its authenticity to the Bible?" Where is the criterion of truth? Where is authority?

"*The Bible, a sufficient guide to every Christian,*" *was the body and soul of the Reformation of the sixteenth century.* But "as a body, Protestantism had congenital rickets, and started out at a hobbling gate."

1. The right of private interpretation was not entirely respected.

2. The authority imputed to the Holy Scriptures

was not confined, as it ought to have been, to religion and morals, but it was made to compass science and nature, and to speak authoritatively on everything in the heavens above and in the earth beneath. The Reformers would tolerate no science that was not in harmony with their interpretation of Genesis. Not only so, but it was claimed that the Bible contained the sum and substance of all knowledge useful or profitable to man—a maxim employed with such pernicious effect by Tertullian and Augustine, and which had been so often enforced by papal authority.

With the *Papal Government*, the *Index Expurgatorius* guarded the fountain of Romish teaching and stamped each book, or manuscript, with Papal authority under pains and penalties; with the *Reformers* there was in essence the same thing in the *Odium Theologicum*, that meant to stamp out heresy. Luther declared that the study of Aristotle was wholly useless. His vilification of the Greek philosopher knew no bounds. "He is," said Luther, "truly a devil, a horrid calumniator, a wicked sycophant, a prince of darkness, a real Apollyon, a beast, a most horrid impostor on mankind, one in whom there is scarcely any philosophy, a public and professed liar, a goat, a complete epicure, this twice execrable Aristotle." (He had better just called him an "old fogy" and been done with it.) By the authority of the *Index Expurgatorius* Galileo writhed in torture; and Servetus burned at a slow fire by *authority* of the "*Odium Theologicum*" heaped on in fiery mode by Calvin.

The booted and spurred Knights of opinionism tilted at everything in the heavens above and in the earth beneath. By them the two worlds and purgatory must be inspected and all things adjusted according to system.

To maintain authority even on questions not treated in the Bible—which are mainly the questions that divide Christendom to-day—the authoritative doctrine called a Creed, sealed Protestant faith ; and the infallibility of the Church, and then of the Pope, held together the papal skeleton. Thus authority was proclaimed that there might abide something they called faith, on the earth. That many precious, vital Bible truths were thus involved is certain, and for this we ought to be grateful. But the Creed authority was little less imperative than the Infallibility dogma, and succeeded almost as well in displacing the authority of the word of God. Conscience and the fear of God were subdued by the creed, and love was well-nigh banished. As a sample of the attainments of the Puritans in asserting their human for divine authority, there is given in Neal's History an account of the poor man Naylor, who was publicly whipped while being conducted on horseback from Westminster to the Old Exchange London, where his tongue was bored through with a hot iron. All this was because he did not think aright—did not think as Parliament thought. (An unsavory reminder of the relics of the Inquisition which I saw in Venice —the thumb-screws, and the head-piece which was put on and screwed up tight when the head thought

wrong, or did not accept the *authority as to how to think*.)

Against the authority of human creeds to bind the conscience, biblical enlightenment has been moving for ages; and in this our day has come—just as most things that ought to come do come—the inevitable:

I. Disregard of the Authority of Human Creeds.

This disregard characterizes the tallest, broadest leading thinkers of our day, and the reason seems plain enough. Those who have all along believed in the authority of the Holy Scriptures have known that Protestantism, in her haste and by mistake, bore off, in her flight from Rome, many rags of popery, which she has persistently worn, and which, though æsthetically trimmed and fringed, still disgrace her. Traditions, I mean; yes, *traditions*, as absurd as any she left behind in Rome. What has Romanism to-day more absurd than Protestant infant baptism! The Romanist claims it on the authority of the church that enacted it; the Protestant reads it nowhere save in his human creed which was copied from the Catholic ritual. Again, the doctrine of consubstantiation, or of transubstantiation, is good religion in comparison with that philosophy introduced by a monk, revived by Augustine, systematized by Calvin, and expressed in the Old School Confession of Faith thus: "God has foreordained certain men, women, angels and infants to eternal damnation, irrespective of any good or evil foreseen in them." Did you

never read that document with Bible verses, printed in small type, as references, below, to aid the predestinated in "drawing forth the eternal juice and marrow of the Scriptures for the explaining of things?" The confounding these human creeds with what the Bible really teaches, has caused not a few to reject both creed and Bible and go into infidelity.

Is there any doubt that the spirit of our age is the disregard of the authority of the human creed? Then I refer you to the fact that disjointed and divided Protestantism has been asserting in our day, to her shame, that these doctrines over which she is divided into warring sects are, after all, *nonessentials*. And this plea only aggravates the sin of division, which is extensively and keenly felt, (as witness the Congress of Churches and other movements to hide the faults of sectism). For while it is admitted that the doctrines of the human creeds are *nonessential*, to Christianity, they *are essential* to these divided and conflicting forms of religion, and they make each to differ essentially from the other, and also from Christianity. It has been said that "a man could as easily learn Presbyterianism from the Koran as Methodism from 'The Confession of Faith,' or Presbyterianism from the 'Book of Common Prayer.'"

Hence, there is no wonder that on the ground of Protestant nonessentials persons are received into any and all of the churches named, without one question as to whether they believe the human creed

or not! Its authority is disregarded and it is the Spirit of the Age that does so despite the theology in the case. This is well. This is hopeful. For human authority in religion ought to be disregarded. But, alas, along with this is also

II. The Disregard of Divine Authority in Religion.

This evil, I fear, more than counterbalances the good. By what authority do you teach this, or practice that? Is it Scriptural? and such like questions, are dismissed, sometimes, with a sneer; and he who asks such questions is looked upon as a fossil, as not "up to the demands of the age, as devoid of its spirit and doomed to be left behind." Would that I could think of this as merely an accident. Alas, it seems to be a determination. (1) The wild vagaries of revivalists often substitute for the authority of Jesus, a superstition which has its culmination in the artful pliance of tricks to get up an excitement. On one occasion, when the "*spirit of the age*" seemed to move the people to come out of sectarian ruts and walk together on the highway, I read the very words of Jesus on salvation, and was lectured privately for it, and was admonished not to do it again, because "such Scriptures would destroy the spirituality of the meeting!" The reading of the word of God destroy spirituality! It would destroy a sham spirituality that goes by that name, but not the reality. These zealots remind me of the young man who came running and bowing and kneeling to the

Savior, and saying, "Good Master, what good thing can I do?" The Savior told him, and it destroyed his spirituality at once—it took the life out of him—because he did not want to do it. It is verily believed that the so-called spirituality of the motley Christianity from that in Brooklyn Tabernacle and Plymouth pulpit down to the ranting camp-meeting, would each be destroyed by reading what Jesus and his apostles say on the salvation of sinners.

(2) If the Word of God be read and insisted upon as expressing the authority in respect to the remission of sins, would any one say, "*You are a legalist?*" It has been said, and the very saying is a sign more foreboding of evil than the discarding of human authority is a prophecy of good. But it indicates the *spirit of the age*—even the rejection of the authority of the word of God.

(3) The old mistake that deluged Europe in blood was the stretching of authority ecclesiastic over the heavens and the earth, with the claim that the Bible taught all that any one might venture to know of science and philosophy; the modern mistake, the *spirit of the age*, is the old sin reversed, that of stretching science and philosophy over Bible revelations, and with puny reason telling the Infinite what his own words ought to mean, and what they must mean. This is tantamount to a disregard of the authority of the Bible. It is proper to ask, in elucidation of my meaning, who believes what the Bible says just because the Bible says it? Yet nothing short of this is due respect to the word of God.

Just here I remark that no one can be said to believe what he does not apprehend—does not understand as a statement—for if he does not understand what is stated, he cannot know whether he believes it or not; yet his failure to understand is no warrant for his saying, "It is not true."

(4) *The practical ignoring of Bible statements*, not on the ground of inability to understand what is stated, but because "*the spirit of the age*" is against the statement, is manifest in the feminine prominence—not effeminate but quite masculine—that pleases some of the weaker sex. Notwithstanding the explicit prohibition in the word of God, women are told to preach the gospel from the pulpit and are encouraged to do just what Paul says is a shame for a woman to do, with the plea that it is not *now* a shame for women to speak in the church. How do you know it is not? By what authority do you so decide? In whose eyes is it not *now* a shame? In your own? There is also that other comforting plea that women can do something. They can talk. Which has never been questioned. The explanation of the eleventh chapter of 1st Corinthians so as to justify modern feminine public preaching has committed suicide, but, nothing daunted, the "*Spirit of the Age*" says that Paul was an old bachelor, and did not know how to talk about women any how, notwithstanding Paul says, in this very connection, "If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments

of the Lord." Nor is it at all logical to classify this prohibition with the ancient practice of feet-washing, which has passed away, for it is evident that feet-washing belonged to a bare-footed age, and was not a church ordinance.

When the question turns on an honest effort to get the meaning of the Scriptures, and women are told to preach and to publicly edify the church because the Scriptures authorize them to do so, I have respect for the claim; but when the verse, "in Christ there is neither male nor female," is quoted as proof, I am tempted to ask these women why they do not quote the same verse to prove that some men ought not to preach. It would serve the one purpose as well as the other, since there is nothing about teaching or preaching in it. But if instruction is needed, go to where it is given, and learn that, as in 1 Cor. 14, Paul enjoins silence on women in regard to speaking in the church to edification; so also in 1 Tim. 2:11-15, he says: "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence." Why, Paul, is it because the position and condition of woman in society *then* demanded this, and her bettered condition and position *now* does not demand it? Is this the reason? No, it is founded not on the *spirit of any age*, but in the eternal fitness of things, and Paul states at least three reasons why women should not do what he forbids: (a) "For Adam was first formed, then Eve" (there is something implied in this). (b) "And Adam was

not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression." (c) Provision is made for woman's being excused, by the law of her being, from public teaching in the church, and for her salvation, "if she continue in faith, charity, holiness with sobriety." When women do what is enjoined upon them they will have their hands and heads and hearts full. I am entirely willing to trust the enlightened conscience of God-fearing, cultured Christian women in this matter, but I will not trust "*the spirit of the age*" to tell her what her duty is.

(5) The introduction into the faith and practice of the church what we cannot read about in the New Testament, is indicative of the *spirit of the age* to disregard the authority of the Bible. Strange that this should ever have been resorted to, for even economy would say: what you need not have in doing the will of God, you had better let alone. Christianity cannot afford to cumber itself with *non-essentials*. In other words, barring the refinement of the case, I would not whistle in church simply because I find in the New Testament no authority for so doing. (It is stated on good authority that a brother did whistle a hymn in church at the time of the solemn worship —because he could not sing it—and this for the sake of the good music there was in that particular tune.) The plea is made that we must have methods of doing the will of God and that the methods are expedients. This is true provided you do not get off of the line of doing what is authorized, and go to doing something else. Lectures on methods are given as

though the method is something clear outside of Bible instruction. Well, some methods are. Recently the old way of putting the matter of respect for the authority of the Bible was revised thus: "Where the Bible speaks we are silent, and where the Bible is silent, we are authorized to speak." This may do with reference to those subjects—such as Science, Art, Literature, etc., which the Bible does not profess to speak upon; but with respect to Christianity the *revised* statement is utterly faulty. The question would surely come: "By what authority do you speak?" and if your speech is to have force and be acted upon, you must go back and get the spirit of the age that is past and fetch on the thumb-screws and head-gear that will give authority. But you say, you will speak the truth and truth has authority within itself. Granted! but when you speak the truth on the subject of Christianity you speak what you learn in the New Testament, else how will you know whether you speak the truth or not? Trouble all along this line would be allayed by closer attention to what is meant by "*things expedient*." One says, "anything and everything not contravening divine law is what is meant by *things expedient*," but this is too loose for a definition. It is too vague to settle anything. "Something that the Scriptures do not enjoin but which we may do," says another. But how shall we know that we may do it? "By sanctified common sense," it is said; but this is too rare and too variable to be relied upon. Besides, while sanctified common sense may tell us which

expedient to select, it cannot tell us what things are expedient. The Bible must guide us, and must tell us what expedients are. When *how* to do what is enjoined is the question, we must learn from the Scriptures, not whether this means or that is forbidden, but what means are involved in the Scripture requirements. The New Testament as certainly encompasses the *means* as it enjoins the duty, and we appeal to the same Scripture statement to learn both. Not only so, but the thing to be done must be seen in the means (or method) employed, in order that the means be an expedient. Furthermore, an expedient is a necessity. The right to use anything in God's service is the necessity for its use, under given circumstances. There are no needless things contemplated in Christianity. For example, we have the broad command, "*Teach the nations.*" But how? What is the method? Shall I teach publicly, or privately? Shall I address the eye or the ear?—make signs to the deaf, or print the words that they may be read? I may do any or do all of these things. Why? Because each *is teaching.* And I learn how or what to do under given circumstances by learning what it is *to teach.* I must teach in some way, and somewhere. Hence when I choose (there is choice in things expedient) to print a paper, and thereby teach, I claim divine authority for it, because it is included in the command "to teach" as one of the means of doing the thing commanded. There is an element of necessity in things expedient which we must recognize if we respect the authority of the

word of God. We must not grow weary in answering the queries: Where is your authority for a Sunday-school, for a hymn-book, for a meeting-house, for a missionary society, but give the authority every time, and express it not tamely, you *may* have these things, for that is not saying anything definitely, and certainly not as the New Testament imposes duty. Let there be a tremendous *ought*, in each case, for if there be no obligation, we may be sure we have hold of something that does not belong to Christianity. Neither will it suffice to say that "on general principles" we recognize Bible authority for this or that. Authority does not use such language. The man who was to be hung "*on general principles*," did not hang, because the case was not made out. We must always make out the case.

If it be objected that we can never regulate the affairs of the kingdom of Christ by thus appealing to the New Testament for direction, I answer that it depends on what you propose to regulate—what things you propose to do. Some things I know cannot be regulated, nor could they be in the church if proper respect were had for the authority of the Scriptures. Or, if any one thinks he can find out for himself without the authoritative New Testament teaching what is well pleasing to God, then to such an one a revelation was given for little purpose. I offer no manner of objection to any one's discovering truth wherever he can, and when he gets it, he will find authority in it—for this is characteristic of truth; but on the subject of Christianity, when any one gets

what he knows is *true*, he will get it in the New Testament, and that will be authority to be, and to do, all that is in the truth.

The Bible does instruct us by stating what we are to do, and to be, in principles that are to rule us, and thereby teaches as definitely as though specifications were given; *e. g.* there is the teaching that a man must "provide for his own," etc. In winter, fuel must be provided for the widowed sister, but the word *fuel* is not in the Bible. There is a necessity to get either wood or coal, and all things considered coal (you decide) is best—is therefore, expedient; and he is a Bible, whole-Bible, and-nothing-but-a-Bible man who shovels in the coal, although the word "coal" is not in the Bible.

I have given my reasons for thinking that "*the Spirit of the Age*," in religion, is *disregard for authority*. It is good, and full of hope, as it disregards human authority; but is evil, and only evil as it casts off, or neglects divine authority. "Authority" is the proper word, for the Church of Christ is not a democracy, but a *kingdom;* and Jesus is King forever. To receive and to obey the word of God is to receive and obey the Lord Jesus, and this is to bow to his *authority*.

THE FUNCTION OF THE UNDERSTANDING IN MATTERS OF RELIGIOUS BELIEF.

BY G. W. LONGAN.

In questions of faith, as in other fields of inquiry, the Understanding has rights which cannot be surrendered without degradation of manhood. And as there are rights not to be surrendered, so there are duties, the performance of which, cannot be neglected without dishonor. The intellect should be a faithful sentinel ever keeping watch at the door of the heart to preserve it from false beliefs and baleful superstitions. Grant that the human understanding, at best, is finite and fallible. Concede frankly that unquestioning conviction will be less easy, if the perplexed inquirer must pause at every step to verify his results, or weigh impartially the endless suggestions of his aroused intellect. All this, and much more, may well go without debate. Doubtless, it will sometimes happen, that grave questions must be long left undecided, which a more easy-going credulity would settle with little hesitation. This is but part of the cost one must pay, if he insists that his beliefs shall command the assent of his reason. In such a case, this penalty must, doubtless, be often suffered in the course of an average life-time. Still, it is forever true, that to believe without the free and full consent

of the intellect is a reproach to one's manhood. This, I judge, cannot well be made too emphatic.

Romanism has sought to make the way of faith easy by transferring the burden of investigation from the individual seeker for truth to a supernaturally guided church. Individuals may make mistakes, but not the church. In the true church, or in the Head of the true church, speaking as the church's teacher, resides infallibility. Otherwise, how shall anyone, in the midst of conflicting counsel, know when he has certainly found the truth? Questions of dogma decided by the church are, therefore, decided forever. An infallible church never retreats. In the presence of a declared dogma, the Catholic layman, or even the priest, whatever be his rank, has no alternative but to submit. What the church declares true, must be true to him, whether his own reason says it is true or not. What is his reason when weighed against an infallible church? This theory might quiet the scruples of an uneasy conscience, if only one difficulty were surmounted. On what ground, one cannot help asking, must this dogma of infallibility be accepted? Does the church concede anything to reason here, at the threshold? May I consult my understanding, at least this once, before surrendering it forever? How is this? Let us see. If the dogma of infallibility were certified clearly to my reason at the outset, I might safely enough permit the church to think for me ever afterwards. In that case, I should, indeed, be logically bound to accept the church's dogma, whatever my own perverse under-

standing might urge against it. When the Spirit of God speaks, there is an end of all controversy. And, if the church is infallible, it is because the church is the organ of the Spirit. All this the believer in the dogma of church, or papal infallibility, does most steadfastly hold and profess. But alas! if I supposed, for a moment, that I was to be allowed the use of my reason in deciding this question of infallibility, I did most blindly err. The church asserts her own infallibility, and I must take the church's word, or she will never own me as her son. I must take her word, because it is her word, and without other authentication, however preposterous her claim may appear in the light of my own poor understanding. Certainly it would be a real comfort, if one could just give himself up to the guidance of an infallible church in all matters of belief. No one who has ever realized the perplexities incident to honest inquiry into grave questions, can doubt this. Oh! if there only were such a church, with what a glad heart would I carry to it the burden of every hard problem my soul has known! But there is no such church. Honest reason pronounces the claim of infallibility an unholy assumption, a shrewd, priestly device to obtain control of the souls and bodies of the unthinking multitude. So far, at least, every Protestant gives due honor to his understanding. Elsewhere he may falter, but not here. This, by universal Protestant consent, is of the very essence of Luther's declaration of independence, defiantly hurled at the papal throne. But is there then no refuge from doubt? Must each

man positively think out for himself every belief which he is entitled to hold? Is the idea of an infallible standard of truth, or norm of faith, a misleading phantasy? If the church, like the individual disciple, is fallible, is not everything then left at loose ends? Is there no supreme authority by which all possible theories may be tested? Protestants say there is such a supreme authority, only it is not the church, but the words of prophets, apostles, Jesus the divine Son of God. These are the true organs of the Spirit. The Bible contains infallible truth, because it contains their words; the words of the Holy Spirit spoken through them. And the Protestant principle, put in this form, will stand. There need be no fear of that. As regards Catholics and Protestants, putting the question in the old way, it is the difference between an infallible church and an infallible Bible. But in this case, one may say, "What does the Protestant gain? Why prefer an infallible book to an infallible church? In either case the reason is declared subordinate." I answer, the gain is much in every way, but chiefly in this: The franchise of the understanding, on the Protestant principle, is conceded from the outset. The question about the Bible is itself, to the Protestant, a question for the understanding. The right of private judgment, so emphasized by all the great reformers, clearly includes this question with the rest. Does one ask, "Is the Bible the word of God?" Or, putting it somewhat differently, perhaps, he may say, "Does the Bible contain the word of God?" In either case, according to the

Protestant rule, the question is included in the right of private judgment. Certainly a man's status, as believer or unbeliever, is determined by the way he answers such questions. But either question answered affirmatively installs the Bible as a book of authority. Both Catholics and Protestants, as everybody knows, accept the Bible. The difference at this point is, that Catholics accept it on the authority of the church simply, that is, on the authority of tradition, while Protestants bring to the decision of the question all the tests and criteria sanctioned by enlightened reason. The Catholics insist that this is the germ of rationalism. Very well; it is a sort of rationalism which shall pass without damage the ordeal of the judgment day. The presumption is that every Protestant accepts the Bible on grounds which satisfy his understanding. This is the true Protestant principle. Theoretically, whatever one may say as to practice, Protestants do not build on tradition. This is their chief distinction, and, unless true here, one is a bastard Protestant, not worthy of the name. But, in point of fact, I suppose that average Protestants, fall far short of this grand formative principle of their great leaders. Still, it must be said, that, in theory at least, Protestants are committed to reason, as against tradition. And this, it must be confessed, is no small honor.

Since among Protestants, then, the question concerning the Scriptures is acknowledged to be one for the understanding, it becomes, at once, on account of its fundamentality, the great question which, in

point of importance, transcends all others. But this most important question, in some of its aspects, is a very wide one, and, what is more discouraging, a very difficult one. Contained in it are numerous implied questions: (1) Questions as to the genuineness of books; *i. e.*, were the several books of Scripture really written by the men to whom they are traditionally ascribed? (2) Questions of authenticity; *i. e.*, whether the authors be known or unknown, are the books themselves of divine origin, and rightfully in the canon of Scripture? If these questions are not to be decided by simple tradition—and Protestantism says they are not—then an inquirer in this large field concerning the authority of Scripture, certainly has an immense work on his hands. How utterly incompetent for such a work the Protestant masses are, no one needs to be told. Even the more intelligent members of our denominations, leaving out, of course, the educated clergy, have not yet fairly looked these questions in the face, much less reached a reasonable solution of them. Still, true Protestantism turns bravely away from tradition, and exalts the right of private judgment. In this it unquestionably does well.

What then is the meaning, among Protestants, of this boasted right of private judgment? Is it held that every believer has for himself carefully inquired into the evidences, external and internal, of the canonicity of the separate books of Scripture, and, as the result of such personal inquiry, accepted the collective Scriptures as the word of God? Or, at

least, as containing the word of God? Every one knows such a plea to be utterly preposterous. And if this is to be taken as the meaning of the celebrated formula, then Protestantism, without doubt, stands self-condemned before the world. Not one Protestant in five hundred has, as a matter of fact, reached his faith in the Bible through such an investigation. Than this nothing is more absolutely certain. To save the Protestant principle, therefore, it is clear that a better way must be found. Does this better way exist? This is a question of deep import to every one of us. It may be said that the Protestant principle does not imply that every believer shall have personally gone through a searching, critical inquiry into the evidences. In the nature of the case this was impossible. It may be said that it is altogether sufficient if certain learned and faithful men have done so and given us, in intelligible terms, their chief results. This, indeed, as to substance, has been said. But seriously, my brethren, is not this a surrender of the Protestant cause? Surely it is nothing else. The few who have investigated may, indeed claim to have accepted the Scriptures on the principle of private judgment, but what of the countless multitudes that have not investigated? At most, they have only exercised private judgment in the choice of the leaders whom they follow. What is this but the Catholic position under a very flimsy disguise? John Robinson has not investigated the evidences, but John Smith has investigated them, and so Robinson appropriates Smith's private judgment as his

own, not dreaming in the least that in doing so he is transferring himself bodily to the Catholic camp. And yet this is, in principle, the simple fact. If private judgment means anything at all, it means personal investigation. Protestant tradition may be better than Catholic tradition, but it is tradition no less, if the personal understanding has not actually grappled with the questions necessary to an intelligent personal decision. It must be clear, then, that to accept the Bible as the book of God upon no better ground than that learned and wise men have examined into its claims and decided in its favor, is no other than the Catholic theory somewhat differently expressed. But as regards the inspiration and canonicity of books, it is also clear that average Christians are, and must forever remain, to a great extent, uninformed. How, then, can the principle of private judgment be vindicated, and the authority of tradition repelled? There is a vast amount of significance in this short question.

Some years ago, England's greatest statesman, Hon. W. E. Gladstone, gave the English-speaking public a most interesting and instructive essay on "The value of authority in matters of opinion." He insisted, in substance, that great questions need not remain always in debate; that a general consensus reached after ample investigation is, in some sense, a decision for all time, and that it is safe to accept such decisions, and act upon them fearlessly, without going to the trouble of a personal examination in every case. He indeed stipulated that the investiga-

tion should be thorough, that it should, if need be, run through several generations of earnest and competent inquirers, and that the final conclusion should express the common agreement of the wisest and best men. Such a decision he thought might, in most cases, be safely accepted as a finality. Ever after the case might be treated—to use a phrase of the lawyers—as *res adjudicata;* a thing definitely settled. He then proceeded to apply these views to the Christian religion, in reference both to the question of its divine origin, and that of its leading doctrines. As regards the origin of the Christian faith in its fundamental facts and generalizations, he urged that it had been subjected to a most searching investigation in the first centuries of its history, and that it had come forth from the ordeal grandly triumphant. It had held its ground firmly against every assault made upon it, through all the centuries, down to our own day. It had commanded the assent of the most enlightened men of the most enlightened nations in all periods of its history. Its trial had, therefore, been complete, and its vindication effectual. It was absurd to consider it among the things yet in debate. Especially was it removed from the theatre of discussion, as regards laymen, in Christian lands. These might confidently rest in the verdict of the most enlightened men, among the most enlightened nations, long since fully rendered. There was not the least reason why they should allow themselves to be perplexed over new assaults upon a hereditary faith, which had so long held its ground

against every form of attack. Neither was there reason why any such layman should attempt, on his own account, to traverse the wide ground of criticism and defense embraced in our modern discussions, in order to the confirmation of his faith. Why should one doubt what wiser and better men, in so many generations, have most devoutly believed? Fear is groundless, and personal inquiry a work of supererogation. As regards the "distinguishing doctrines" of the gospel, he settles all doubts in the same summary way. Different generations have had different questions of doctrine to decide. First of all came the doctrine of our Lord's person, of his divinity, and oneness, as to substance, with the Father. Then came the exciting questions of the Augustinian epoch, and, last of all, the long and bitter struggle of the glorious reformers with the effete system of the papacy; effete, I mean, of course, for the wisest and bravest men among the most learned and discriminating peoples. The sum is this: the things settled cover substantially the same ground as the articles and liturgy of the Anglo-Episcopal Church; or, as we might say here, of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America. I have written from memory, not having the means at hand of verifying my impressions. I have done scant justice, I am sure, to the distinguished statesman's able and interesting paper, but I am also confident that I have neither misrepresented nor misunderstood the chief points of his contention. The impression left on my memory is very distinct, and intentional misrepre-

sentation impossible, for there are few men living whom I so ardently admire. May his present temporary humiliation be succeeded speedily by the triumph which he so well deserves.*

But statesmanship is one thing, and theology and ecclesiology are quite different things. Notwithstanding the distinguished Ex-premier's decision, it is still fairly open to us to inquire how far his contention can be made good in the light of unprejudiced and independent investigation. It will be apparent, at a glance, that Mr. Gladstone's ground is essentially that which we have already rejected, as the Catholic principle of tradition under a flimsy disguise. Logically, it is even less tenable than the position of the Catholics. After the first bald and monstrous assumption of the church's infallibility, the Catholic theory is logically invulnerable. The traditions of an infallible church must, in the nature of things, be trustworthy. But, with a confessedly fallible church, the case is far different. In the latter case, the right of private judgment, the duty of personal investigation, which, under the Catholic rule, has no place at all, comes into full play, and cannot be logically set aside. Mr. Gladstone's attempt, like all others in that direction, is, therefore, a manifest failure. If I am to follow tradition at all, then by all means, give me a tradition which has at least the semblance of a logical ground to rest upon. Catholic tradition has this, while Protestant tradition can make no such pretense. Still, authority is not utterly

*Written just after the fall of the Liberal ministry in 1885.

without value. From such a position the mind of a trained investigator instinctively recoils. The conclusions of the wise men who have preceded us are not to be rudely pushed aside. Thoughtful persons will be far from committing such folly. One may accord reasonable weight to tradition, though he may not give it implicit faith. There is a presumption—nothing more—in favor of that which represents a general agreement of the wisest and best men; in other words, the freest and most competent investigators, of many consecutive generations. It would surely be a rash thing if one should seek to cut himself loose from tradition entirely. The accumulated experience and wisdom of the ages should not be lightly rejected. He must be brave to a fault, who can think of counting all the stores of traditionary knowledge for stark naught in his scheme of life. So much in favor of tradition, let us freely grant. That the argument of authority is not to be thrust aside with a sneer, as a senseless appeal to the ages of ignorance, I readily admit. In temper, I am very much a conservative, whatever some persons may have thought to the contrary. Yet I cannot consent to rest in the decisions of other men. I insist that the right of private judgment, under the Protestant rule, shall be freely accorded to all Christ's disciples. It is easy enough to admit that a certain weight should be allowed to tradition, but not so easy to determine, in particular instances, just what that weight should be. I confess I have seldom been able, in given cases, to settle to my entire satisfaction what

the argument of authority, whether representing traditions from the past, or the conclusions of distinguished contemporaries, is really worth. Indeed, I always feel better satisfied, however liable to mistake I may be, when I have made an honest effort, in the exercise of private judgment, to ascertain for myself what is truth. I doubt not, brethren, that your experience accords, in this respect, with my own. The spirit of free and honest investigation has become to such an extent the spirit of the age, that the danger is not so much now that men will blindly follow the lead of others, as that they will rush headlong into investigations for which they are by no means adequately equipped. Personal investigation is the fashion at present, and men of all varieties of calibre are pushing their way into all sorts of difficult fields, and announcing their supposed discoveries with a boldness far exceeding that of the most accomplished explorers. This is, no doubt, to be deprecated, but it certainly indicates the existence of wide dissatisfaction with the traditional decision of many important questions. That such dissatisfaction really exists, there can be no manner of doubt. In the end, there must come glorious things out of this mighty travail of human souls in quest of truth, which is going on before our eyes in the present age. Why should a man accept his beliefs, at second hand, from any source? Why give to great men, whether living or dead, more than the weight of a possible presumption in their favor, a presumption to be confirmed or refuted afterwards by the results of independent personal inquiry?

The men of the past have made mistakes, many and grave, mistakes, on all sorts of subjects. It is not in the domain of physical science only that the conclusions of the ancients cannot be implicitly trusted. There were grand men, doubtless, in the old days, but their investigations were tentative, preparatory, rather than final. The race was toiling slowly up its long ascent from the dense ignorance of prehistoric times, and the conditions necessary to final judgments on the greatest problems did not yet exist. While, therefore, there may be a certain presumption in favor of such historic decisions as still command the assent of many intelligent men, there is nevertheless a well-grounded suspicion—a suspicion suggested and supported by blunders known to have been committed—which strongly demands the guaranty of personal investigation, before we accord to them an unhesitating acceptance. So, whichever way one turns, the Protestant principle of personal inquiry is seen to be still in full force. If the great Reformers were themselves justifiable in breaking with the traditions of many Catholic centuries, because the world had outgrown them, surely no one can be blamed now for repudiating Protestant traditions, wherever it is clear that the same reason exists. The sum of our apparent digression is this: No decisions of the past are final to the men of to-day. Such decisions may be true; in many instances, let us not doubt, they are true; but they must stand on their own merits, and not on fallible tradition. Catholic or Protestant, they are liable to be reversed on

appeal to the high court of the Understanding, any day. There is nothing in the whole range of human belief which may claim exemption from this rule. And so we get back to our point touching the Scriptures, with the question more fully before us, and, therefore, with better preparation to handle it satisfactorily. It is in order to repeat now with added emphasis what was said in the beginning against the notion that one can rest his faith in God's word on other men's investigations without intellectual reproach. It is a most fallacious conclusion, and must not be entertained for a single moment. But is there not a resting-place for faith in Christ, which fully satisfies the demands of the understanding, and, at the same time, takes little account of perplexing questions about the inspiration and canonicity of books? It is confidently held that such a resting-place for faith exists. It is indeed a question whether our faith in Christ is not the main ground for our acceptance of the Bible, rather than the Bible the evidential basis of our faith in Christ. To many this will seem a strange inversion of things, but the suggestion is surely not wholly unworthy our attention. So far as the New Testament is concerned, we know it was preceded by the oral gospel, and that many churches existed before even the first New Testament book appeared. Men believed in Christ and died for him without any New Testament.

Questions of inspiration and canonicity gave slight trouble to the primitive preachers and their converts. The great question of that age was a question of fact:

Did Jesus rise from the dead the third day? Or, varying the form without altering the sense, Is Jesus the Son of God and Savior of men? This question was decided upon evidence intellectually appre hended and honestly weighed, and not at all upon the authority of a book. The evidence, as presented by the primitive preachers, was, for the most part, personal or prophetic. Prophecy became evidential by its fulfillment, and not by mere authority. The personal testimony of the first preachers appears to have been prominent in all their discourses. "We have seen and heard," was at the ground of every appeal. But the truth preached carried also its own witness to the heart. Apart from all formal proof, the story of Christ's life and death, representing, as it has ever done, the love of the Infinite God to our sinful, guilty and condemned race, was its own most convincing assurance of heavenly origin. In this way Jesus came to the post-resurrection world in the gospel proclamation nearly two thousand years ago, and has remained with it ever since. He is here in our midst, with his offer of eternal life, to-day. He is here independent of all questions of inspiration or canonicity. I admit the importance of these questions. I believe in inspiration as a supernatural fact. I accept the canon, with unimportant reservations perhaps, as it has come down to us from the first age of the church. What I deny is, that we are compelled to settle questions of inspiration or canonicity, before we can, as *rational men*, accept Jesus of Nazareth as the Son of God and Savior of the world.

My present averment hath precisely this extent; no more, no less. The essence of the matter is that the question about Christ, both in the order of logic and in that of human experience, is the prior question, while inquiries regarding the inspiration of books properly come afterwards. It is true, that faith in Christ may be said to imply, in a certain sense, the validity and trustworthiness of biblical books, but it leaves the doctrine of inspiration, and the canonicity of particular books, open for subsequent investigation. In order to intelligent faith in Christ it is only necessary that one shall be assured of the general historical accuracy of the documents on which we must depend for our knowledge of his life, and the contents of the gospel originally preached in his name. So far, our ground is undisputed. The historical validity, in a general way, of the first three gospels is not denied, even by rationalists like Keim and Renan. With this concession alone, the question concerning "Jesus who is called Christ," becomes fairly soluble. The criticism of books, and all kindred questions, may be rightly postponed to a later time. But from this standpoint, the evidence on which the soul must mainly rest, as its rational ground of faith, is that which the truths of redemption carry in themselves to every awakened conscience. "By manifestation of the truth," said one who well understood both himself and his work, "we commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God." Of the vast numbers who are Christians to-day, at least ninety-nine in every

hundred are such mainly, if not exclusively, on this ground. The best way to convert skeptics, after all, is to preach to them faithfully the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Their special difficulties will need to be removed, but that work done, the gospel, rather than the evidences, in the technical forms of the schools, is the most certain instrument of success. The gospel makes a direct appeal to that which is confessedly highest and best in our human nature, and to honest and unprejudiced seekers for truth can never appeal in vain. The truths of redemption are so correlated to our conscious needs and higher aspirations, that their light becomes the light of the soul by a process which is so direct as to transcend apparently mere logical forms. In reality however, this is not true. The major premise is carried in thought, as it were, unconsciously. It may be stated as follows: Whatever is absolutely adjusted to man's higher nature is true. The minor premise is indeed a direct perception. I do not call it an intuition, because gospel truth comes to the soul from without. It is only the fact of correlation, the sense of actual adjustment, which is immediate. In this there is nothing exceptional.

> "If our eye was not sun-like in its construction,
> How then could we see the light of the sun?
> And, if God's own power did not live within us,
> How could we take delight in the divine?"

These words of Goethe express not, as some may chance to think, the idle dream of a mystic, but the profound insight of one of the world's greatest think-

ers. It is man's moral and spiritual nature which makes religion possible to him. This is that better part of him which justifies his claim of kinship with God. The light of God coming to him from without, by means of the gospel, and the light of God in the soul, are correlative, as the eye and the sun. And so the perception of divine truth, as it enters the soul, is scarcely less direct than the perception of sunlight by the healthy eye. The absolute consciousness of this divine correlation is a rock upon which all the weary, burdened ones of earth may lie down to rest with perfect trust. Because it falls naturally into the argument at this point, I shall be pardoned if I quote, with some additions and alterations, from an article of my own, printed in the *Christian-Evangelist* of August 16, 1883:

"I have read the evidences, and criticisms of the evidences, until my head, nay, sometimes my heart, has ached. For I need not say to those who know anything about the external questions of genuineness, canonicity, etc., that there are two sides here, as well as otherwheres, in the great fields of human inquiry. I have listened to Papias, who deposes that 'Matthew wrote the *Logia* in Hebrew, and everybody interpreted him as he was able.' Then the question has been put, and debated, by learned men, whether our Matthew is a translation or an original gospel, or whether Matthew wrote in Hebrew at all; that is, whether Papias was not entirely mistaken in his testimony. I have followed Prof. Theodore Keim in his proofs that Irenæus was mistaken about St. John's

residence in Asia Minor; that he confounded two persons wholly distinct, namely, John the Apostle, who never did reside in Ephesus, and John the Elder, who did. Then I have sat at the feet of Arch-deacon Farrar (grand man he is too, though some people count him half a heretic), and listened with breathless interest to his learned and impassioned attempt to show that Irenæus made no mistake, and that John the Elder, as distinct from John the Apostle, is a myth, and never did have flesh and blood existence at all. These may be taken as fair specimens of matters yet in debate. I have read these things, as I said, till my head ached, and my heart too. I should have found less trouble, doubtless, if I could have read (as, alas! so many do,) only to find proofs of a foregone conclusion. But that I could not do. I am sworn to truth, and want nothing else. Where truth leads, I pray that I may ever have courage to follow. But what of all these perplexities over the evidences and the criticisms? Why, only this: Behind all this mighty war of words and things, and quite independent of it, there is an impregnable fortress in which one may take refuge with unstaggering confidence. As I grow older, my confidence in its impregnability grows stronger. I am absolutely nothing without Christ, as Christ comes to me apart from all these wordy discussions, and the questions involved in them. The planet on which I live, and my life here —nay, every other life here—without him have no real significance. Take him away, and the problem of my life, of all human life, is forever insoluble. If

I may trust my reason ever so little, if I may give heed at all to my moral and spiritual intuitions and aspirations, if there is any meaning or purpose in what is, without doubt, the highest and best side of my nature, then the faith which appeals to these so mightily cannot be mere mocking unreality. Was it Coleridge who said, 'The Bible finds me oftener than any other book?' Perhaps it was, but no matter; he who said it had grasped a truth which shall stand when many hoary delusions have passed away. It may suit the purpose of special pleaders to ridicule it, but the honest investigator, looking anxiously for the bottom facts along these lines, will first ponder over it, and then accept it. The Bible never, indeed, misses an honest conscience. Jesus is as familiar with that which is inmost and deepest in human thought and impulse, as I am with the rooms of the house I live in every day. I should not, as in my better moods I see quite clearly, half understand myself, if I did not have him for my teacher. Suppose I am not sure whether Papias was right when he said Matthew wrote the *Logia* of Jesus in Hebrew? Suppose I am not quite clear as to whether John, the Elder of Ephesus, was a real man, or a nebulous phantom conjured up by puzzled historians? Let it be admitted that I am not absolutely free from misgivings as to the authorship of the Fourth Gospel. What then? Is it not still true that the earthly life of Jesus is undeniable reality? It were insanity to doubt here. No thoughtful man on earth to-day does doubt here. That many of his deeds and words are

faithfully reported to us in the Gospels, is as certain as anything in history. I know enough of this man to know that he was more than other men. So much, at least, is secure from the most radical criticism. His whole life is unique, glorious, infinitely attractive. *He said he was the Son of God.* Of that there cannot be a doubt. I can believe HIM with unfaltering faith. In the unquestionable reality of Christ's life, and in his testimony to his own divinity, my anxious soul finds a resting-place from doubt. Though the stars fall, this faith will not fail me. The conclusion, at last, is independent of books of evidence or criticism. But the process is a real argument, and not an idle fancy. It rests not wholly in the emotions; it satisfies the understanding. Such faith is a rational conviction, and not blind credulity. He whose trust reposes in the direct witness of Jesus and his gospel to all that is best and grandest in himself, is not following, blindfold, any human leader. Of all this I feel as certain, as of anything lying beyond the bounds of immediate consciousness."

Here, then, we have a rational ground of faith, apart from all the perplexing questions of scientists and critics. It is a faith that takes nothing on trust, though it makes no pretense of scholarly methods. It is, indeed, its chief characteristic, that it is independent of disputatious critics and pragmatic theologians. It is, therefore, in complete harmony with the Protestant principle of personal investigation. It depends not upon tradition at all. And this is the point to which we have been tending from the

first word till now. So far then we rest our case.

But the questions of inspiration and canonicity have only been set aside temporarily. They are questions of profoundest interest, and cannot be permanently ignored. It is, perhaps, not wise for every one to attempt the task here involved, especially, as it has been shown that this is not the only, nor the most direct, way to intelligent faith; and as a certain scholarly equipment of a very high order is absolutely necessary to the most satisfactory results. Still, a cautious man, who finds the desire to know as much as he may, touching these questions of the age, an irrepressible one, may feel his way safely, where rash and over-confident critics, though much better provided with apparatus for the work, would be liable to wander widely astray. It was, perhaps, necessary to say this to justify my own ventures into these perilous paths; but however that may be, the statement will, I think, commend itself, independent of personal reference, as a very simple and obvious truth. In studies of this sort, the most indispensable qualification is a deathless longing for truth; holy, immortal truth. Without this, real success is impossible. Next to this in importance is the possession of the critical faculty. He who has this faculty, and has it well trained, may succeed where far more scholarly men, without it, would be sure to fail. These things well remembered, one must not be discouraged by the Goliaths of traditionalism from pushing his investigations into these wide and interesting fields. He must expect to be often perplexed. This is the lot

of ingenuous students in every department of inquiry. It is only shallow and conceited people that find no difficulties. But through difficulties and perplexities, it should be well understood, lies the way, not only to the largest knowledge, but to the deepest and truest faith. The plane of tradition is much too low for a true man. He may not affect to despise what others find sufficient, but it will not satisfy his needs. His understanding demands its rights in tones too imperative for resistance. He is willing to believe, but is ever anxiously questioning, on what grounds? He is no egotist, but a cautious, reverent student, whose highest ambition is to gain larger vistas of truth for the delight and uplifting of the soul. It is not enough for him to know that men accounted orthodox and scholarly have explored these (to him) out-of-the-way regions, and published narratives of their travels, with many learned notes and conjectural hints, for the help of less favored brethren. He must use his own eyes and task his own brain. It matters not that the way is toilsome, and that often the object of his search eludes him. He knows that truth is to be found with difficulty, but feels sure that he shall come upon it amid the labyrinths he is treading so patiently. It is clearly the function of the understanding to explore all these realms where the sources of faith, or unfaith, are presumed to have their hiding-places. So I quote again from my article:

"The fathers may have been wise, but it is past questioning that they made many blunders. It could not have been otherwise. They were feeling their

way along the great trunk-lines of truth, in the midst of difficulties. It would be quite as foolish to trust them implicitly as to reject them utterly. If a man may accept the Bible on the ground of tradition, why may he not rest content in many other traditions? If authority is sufficient in the greatest questions, why demand more in matters less important? Why should not one be satisfied with the *sect* of his fathers as readily as the Bible of his fathers? Ah! that question pinches! A man, it is supposed, may say, without reproach, 'I am a Christian, but have not personally studied the evidences. I take the highest Christian scholarship as altogether trustworthy on that question.' Authority may be trusted safely to this limited extent. These good men and great scholars understand the grounds of our faith, and are able to maintain it on any field. They cannot be mistaken. I trust their conclusions without a single tremor of doubt.' This seems, perhaps, to sound plausibly enough. But another says: 'I am a Presbyterian in doctrinal beliefs and church membership. It is indeed true that I have never specially looked into the matters in debate between Presbyterians and others. I have little time to devote to these matters, and can confidently turn them over to the learned and godly ministry of the Presbyterian Church. It is part of their sacred office to investigate such things thoroughly. I cannot pretend to such knowledge. I trust them implicitly. I could not, as a man of affairs, give enough of my time to such investigations to enable me to make sure of my

own conclusions. In the nature of things I must depend on some one, and I prefer to depend on the ministry of the evangelical, and highly respectable, church in which I was born, and to which I feel myself attached by a thousand hallowed ties. Excuse me ; I cannot think a change of my ecclesiastical relations possible.' Another is a Methodist, a Lutheran, an Episcopalian, and expresses himself in much the same way. The Catholic pleads tradition far more plausibly. He is at home in that line of things, while it seems strange that a Protestant of any school should be content without personal investigation. Still, I am very willing to grant that, under circumstances which I need not now take time to state, one may be a Presbyterian, Lutheran, Anglican, or what not, nay, even a Catholic, without just reproach, never having personally investigated any one of the numerous questions which he is logically presumed to have decided in the matter of determining his church membership. Upon the same principle, however, I presume, if one had been born in Arabia, China, or Hindoostan, he might then have been Mohammedan, Buddhist or Brahman, without reproach, quite content to trust ancestral wisdom, transmitted through so many honored generations, and unable to examine personally the issues involved. But where shall this sort of thing end? Positively right here. Every man is responsible for truth when it comes fairly within his reach. Because Michael Maloney, the hod-carrier, who knew nothing of religion, save as it came to him through the Catholic priesthood, has

gone to heaven through that church, it does not follow that our Smiths and Joneses, living under altogether different conditions, can do the same thing. No man can push aside the issues which in God's providence are brought fairly before him, and be innocent. It is the office of the understanding, always and everywhere, to determine what truth is. This responsibility cannot be evaded by any subterfuge, however plausible it may appear. Men have been deluding themselves here quite long enough. The spirit and practice of free personal inquiry must be encouraged at every hazard. The margin of second-hand beliefs must be reduced as rapidly as possible to the minimum. To the majority, this margin must for a long time remain lamentably wide, at best. Let it be cut down somewhat every day. No man of intelligence and culture has any right to be a Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, Lutheran, Mohammedan, Buddhist or Brahman, without honest and adequate personal investigation as the final basis of his faith. A traditional belief can never be more than provisional to a thoughtful man. Than these things, nothing in God's universe is more sure. So the question of faith in all its phases, and in all details, is a question for the understanding of each man, as God gives him opportunity. He may not delegate this trust to pope or council without incurring guilt before God. Ecclesiastical fathers of all schools are without authority here. They may, perhaps, be consulted as helps, but the final decision must be the act of each soul for itself."

In deciding questions concerning the Bible, the freest and fullest criticism is a duty. He who gave us this book begs no favors for it, as one might suppose, if he listened to timid theologians. You honor him most, when you seek to know the whole truth about his book. If there be a human element in its varied contents, you need not fear to say so; as though truth itself could become a crime against Heaven. You are not asked to take tradition, however convenient it might be, for the authorship of the Pentateuch, or the right of Esther, Ecclesiastes, or the Song of Songs, to a place in the canon. These are, each and all, questions for the understanding. The most orthodox clergymen, of the most orthodox denominations, are beginning to give clear recognition to the importance of a most searching biblical criticism. As long ago as 1873, in the World's Convention of Evangelical Christians, held in New York City, Dr. Theo. Christlieb, Professor of Theology at Bonn, Prussia, declared his conviction on this question in the following words:

"In matters of detail, we should not forget that the divine revelation in Scripture is vouchsafed to us in a form not purely divine, but at the same time human, and that even St. Paul distinguishes what he has received from the Lord, from that which is merely his own opinion, as well-meant counsel coming from one who has the spirit of the Lord. . . . . Do not let us forget that no theory of inspiration—however convenient this might seem to many—can dispense us from the duty of a reverent

criticism of Scripture ; a criticism which must extend not only to texts and translations, but also to a searching comparison of the different types of doctrine (*e. g.*, Pauline, Johannean, etc.) and of the various ethnographical, historical and other data with one another, and with profane history. And if this criticism should discover, here and there, later additions, interpolations, chronological discrepancies, and the like, to such we may well apply the words of Luther: 'If there be found a strife in Scripture, and it cannot be settled, let it alone ; it is of little matter so that it runneth not contrary to the articles of our faith.' We must not be too timid in such matters. . . . . It cannot be dangerous, but in the end only helpful to the Christian faith. What cannot be denied, should not be feared. But if criticism seeks to cast suspicion on the whole for the sake of a few isolated discrepancies, then it becomes destructive, and we must draw a hard and sharp line against its false pretensions."

Such is the deliberately expressed judgment of one of the most Evangelical and learned defenders of the common faith in all Protestant Christendom. Its significance is greatly enhanced by the imposing circumstances under which it was delivered. It falls to the lot of few men, in a life-time, to speak in such a presence. Such words, coming from such a man, on so great an occasion, may well challenge our most thoughtful reflection. It will be observed that this duty of criticism—Dr. Christlieb's own word—extends to the entire content of Scripture. History,

Ethnography, Chronology, Types of doctrine—everything is embraced. Scripture data must be compared with Scripture, and, when historical, also with profane history. Not only the consistency of Scripture with itself, and with other reliable sources of knowledge, is to be inquired into, but all deliverances of Scripture are rightfully to be subjected to a most thorough and searching examination, in the light of the gathered wisdom of the centuries, in order that their harmony or disharmony, with the highest and best results of honest and reverent human thought may become fully apparent. Truth, doubtless, is often above reason, but never, certainly, at open war with it. "I believe because it is impossible," may be pardoned in a Tertullian, not in the men of to-day. In our time, it should be held a sin without human forgiveness, to say the least. Revelation, in the theological sense, transcends, in the nature of things, unaided human thought, but truth revealed will ever commend itself to the understanding and conscience of a sincere man, as worthy of most hearty acceptance. The God of the Bible, I repeat, asks no favors for his book. The same treatment which a true man would give to the sources of any other faith in which human hearts have found, or thought that they found, an antidote for life's sorrows, is all that the Bible needs to make good its high claim upon the souls of men. Such a treatment may dissipate some misty theories concerning Scripture, but cannot fail to make its real, superhuman excellencies more fully known. Of these reflections, this is the

sum. The contents of the Bible, not less than its external, historical proofs, are open to thorough criticism, in order to a rational decision of the question of its divine origin. It is painful to argue a thesis which should have been self-evident. But inherited superstitions require inexorable logic, and, not seldom, fasting and prayer, as a condition of permanent exorcism.

After the fundamental question regarding the authority of Scripture has been decided, the scarcely less interesting inquiry as to what it teaches still remains. Here, as elsewhere, the understanding has both rights and duties. In questions of exegesis, it goes without argument, that grammatical and lexical knowledge is of primary importance. Besides, the general rules of interpretation, which all scholars recognize, have their undoubted uses. There is no need to dwell here. Concerning such questions, there can arise no debate. I am much more concerned to state that, in addition to the usual hermeneutical apparatus of the schools, the accomplished, modern exegete must bring to his work some knowledge of the methods of scientific and historico-critical inquiry, and a very hearty sympathy with assured results in both these great fields. One need not concern himself greatly with doubtful or unverified hypotheses, but whatever is looked upon as fairly established, by those competent to have an opinion, must not be lightly thrown aside. More than the equipment of a mediæval theologian is necessary to an interpreter of Scripture whose lot has been cast in

this highly favored age. An exposition of the first chapters of Genesis which should ignore or trifle with the data of science, would only provoke a smile—too often a skeptical smile—from men fairly well instructed in the knowledge of our time. Or, if a commentator should treat the poetical quotation from the uncanonical book of Jasher, in the 10th chapter of Joshua, as actual history, is it not clear that he should be sent back to study anew the more advanced elements of hermeneutical science, as a further preparation for his work? "Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon!" How strange that any one should ever have taken such words for simple history! With quite as much reason, one might regard the book of Job as a common narrative, and not the wonderful poem which it really is. And yet, till the fetters of Mediævalism shall have been thoroughly broken, good men, by no means simpletons, will continue to do these foolish things. Interpreters are afraid to rely upon their common sense, when its decisions clash with the prevailing narrow conception of the sacred text. The trouble in such cases is not really with the Bible, but with an untenable and perverse doctrine about the Bible. A complete emancipation here is one of the greatest needs of Evangelical christendom. It is not radical exegesis that we want, but we are perishing for lack of an exegesis in which the reason is allowed to do honest and faithful service. We are in great need of men who are not afraid to follow the best light that is in them. The

timid conservative who clings tremblingly to hoary superstitions for fear, if he should let go, he would not know where to stop, is the very best friend that radical theologians have. Insisting with all his might that the issue is between two extremes, of which neither is true, he takes the risk of driving ingenuous inquirers to radicalism as the more reasonable ground. Some day we shall know better; and when that day shall have fully come, the net-work of bewildering skepticism in which many excellent men are now entangled, will seem light as cob-web, and as easily swept away. Theories not really in the Bible, theories impossible in the clear light of the understanding, are the stumbling-blocks over which many of our best young men are falling into the gloomy mazes of doubt. If Robert G. Ingersoll's father had not been a minister in one of the narrowest and sternest of our Protestant sects, it is fairly open to question, whether the son would have been the acknowledged leader of aggressive infidelity, in this country, to-day. In any event, it is certain that bad theology, rather than a bad heart, is at the bottom of much of the skepticism we deplore. "If God is not good in the sense which we call good," said John S. Mill, "we cannot love him." And Mill was right. The time has gone by, when notions about God, which exclude goodness in the best human sense, may be expected to command the assent of the intelligent classes. Let us shed no tears of regret on this account.

This leads me to say that genuine Calvinism—the

Calvinism of Calvin and Knox—is practically a thing of the past, not because the battle has been fought on the line of Scripture texts, and won by the anti-Calvinists, but mainly because, on ethical grounds, it has become an impossible faith to the men and women of this generation. I may cherish a profound respect for the man who was taken in childhood and sedulously drilled in the tortuosities of such a faith, because I know too well the power of such a discipline; but of the man who professes, on grounds of independent inquiry, to adhere to it to-day, I confess I am not so certain. And yet, I would not forget to be charitable. More and more, brethren, are enlightened expositors of Scripture coming to realize the importance of giving due weight to rational and ethical considerations in their sacred work. It is by no means intimated that pressure of any kind shall be brought to bear upon the text. The text must be permitted to speak without trammel. A different thought is not to be tolerated a single moment. But every intelligent student of the Scriptures knows how an interpreter's insight is sharpened and strengthened by a comprehensive acquaintance with those great outlying fields of knowledge which have no direct connection with the etymology and syntax of the Greek and Hebrew tongues. Doubtless it would not be well for an interpreter to thrust his reason, or conscience, into questions of pure syntax or lexicography, but he should never forget that the Bible, as God's book, is sure to be both rational and ethical in its ultimate deliverances.

The center and life of all biblical teaching is God. It is not a contradiction to say that Christ is the center of redemption, for Christ is God's manifestation of himself, for redemptive purposes, to the world. The Theistic idea pervades thoroughly both Testaments, and around it are grouped all biblical conceptions of the world and of human life. As a man's idea of God is, so, if he is logical, will be his system of theology. If his idea of God is true and worthy, his doctrinal system will be lofty and inspiring; if, on the contrary, he has low and unsatisfying notions of God, his theological opinions will correspond throughout with their central conception. The reason of this is not far to seek. The human mind necessarily strives to co-ordinate all its conscious possessions. In this process of co-ordination, whatever is clearly inconsistent with the mind's most fundamental convictions is mercilessly excluded, that due consistency and harmony may be secured in what remains. If the idea of God is worthy, whatever opinions refuse to co-ordinate with this idea will be gradually eliminated; and as the unsatisfactory elements are thus being continually dropped out, the remainder is constantly becoming more elevated. If the soul has once been lifted into profound sympathy with the conception of God in the heart of Jesus, it will thenceforth refuse to feed on theological husks, which bring no nutriment to its higher appetencies. Only a theology divine throughout will co-ordinate at all points with this sublime conception of our Creator and Deliverer. But whatever clearly fails to

do so must be inexorably cast aside. There is not a little in our churchly divinity towards which one in full sympathy with Jesus must feel much as he felt towards the miserable traditions of the Scribes and Pharisees of his time. It is not pleasant to me to say these things, but I judge they ought to be said, and should think less of myself if I were to shrink from saying them. And yet there is so much that is good in the great historical creeds, that wholesale denunciation is not at all in place. Let the builders of the creeds have at least justice done them in our estimate of their work. But, then, it must be remembered, that even the Scribes and Pharisees of our Lord's time represented much truth. And yet he did not on that account hesitate to denounce whatever was false in their doctrine or life. A better idea of God, a clearer perception of the demands of righteousness, is at the ground of the general repudiation of Calvinian dogmatics in our time. This process of elimination must go on. Whatever refuses to harmonize fully with the consciousness of God in the bosom of Jesus—to borrow an expression from Ernest Renan—must in the end be consigned to the moles and the bats. And if disharmony is absolutely clear at any point, you need have no fear at all as to the text. A better interpretation will be sure to make that right. The stronghold of Calvinism was once supposed to be in the text, but it has long been apparent to the best expositors that the text itself—the text, of course, in its context and whole biblical setting—is anti-Calvinistic to the core. And so, beyond

all doubt, it will ever be found in the final outcome of free biblical investigation, that any supposed incompatibility between reason and Scripture will disappear. Reason and revelation, both God-given, are certain at last to say the same thing. Only let us be careful that neither is permitted to impinge on the other. As we are accustomed to check the impression of one sense by that of another—the sight by touch, for example—to avoid mistakes in the realm of matter, so let reason and Scripture both testify with the utmost freedom, whenever spiritual truth is the object sought. In this way only can the highest results be reached. But criticism of Scripture must not only be free, it must be as honest as death. While the shams of traditionalism are dealt with mercilessly, the arts of the sophist must be held in undisguised contempt. Great questions give no scope for the sport of triflers. A scholar who approaches Scripture without due seriousness will never reach its inner meaning, however complete his critical equipment. So, also, must the Christian apologist put far from him whatever does not satisfy, in good degree, the demands of his own reason.

Brethren, let us have done forever with explanations which explain nothing, and with harmonies that do not harmonize. It is infinitely better to face honestly the facts, though the temptation to do otherwise may sometimes seem great. Let the understanding have full scope to do honest work, and give the fear of results to the winds. In such cases, it is safe to trust results to God. Whatever is true, has a place

in the divine account. Let us beware lest, Uzza-like, we imagine the ark of God's book in need of our poor help to steady it on the way. It will stand all the jostling, doubtless, and come out unharmed. Let us not fear to know all the facts concerning it.

In our present line of reflection we come naturally to the greatest problem which human thought has had to deal with in all the ages, namely, that of a theological explanation of our world, which shall put all things in due co-ordination with man's highest and best conception of God. Or, in other words, and in the form of a question, how shall we explain the presence of evil in the world so as to make it consist with our Christian idea of God's moral perfections? In this latter form, we shall perceive more clearly its vast importance to us as Christians. After those questions directly involved in salvation through Christ, there is nothing which so fills and awes my whole being as this: How shall the Great All-Father show himself good through a world and a life, in which evil so abounds as to start, not seldom, the question whether it does not actually preponderate? This is indeed the question of questions. Its vast dimensions have been apparent to all thoughtful men. And though its full solution may not be possible this side heaven, still the interest we attach to it is not, on that account, in the least diminished. In the presence of such a question, the understanding may well confess its narrow limitations, but not the less shall it ever be found struggling—groping, if any should prefer the word—towards the light, which, we

cannot but feel, is sure, in the end, to greet its expectant gaze.

In the world we live in things are indeed wonderfully mixed. Good and Evil abound, whichever way we turn our eyes. The same breeze which bears to us the fragrance of fair flowers, the caroling of birds, and the aroma of sweet spices, brings also the groans of the sick and dying, and the despairing wails of suffering and breaking hearts. Such a world, considered as a finality, is, in the light of our highest reason, an impossible world. And in the light of God's perfections, as revealed to us in Christ, it becomes an impossibility more startling still. I cannot hesitate to say this. The understanding utterly refuses to accept such a bundle of incongruities as an adequate expression of the divine perfections of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. This world is only "in part." It must be considered as belonging to a whole not yet fully disclosed to our view. The perfect world, so far at least as man is concerned, is a question of the great hereafter. But such a world, there must be, if the Universe is the conception of an Infinite mind. This world, in that case, is not final, but tentative as it were, preparatory to something better, a stage in the endless procession of God's unfolding wisdom and goodness. To the Christian it is impossible there should have been such a world, save as the fragment of a vast conception, which, taken in its sublime totality, contains the explanation of each integral part. But as such a world as ours is an impossibility to thought, save as

part of a larger and grander whole, so a frail, finite child of the dust, like man, is equally an impossibility without Christ. Yes, Dr. Bledsoe was right, when he said in his "Theodicy," "If Christ had not been in God's mind, man had not been created." This, let us not doubt, is a faithful saying, which the light of eternity shall fully justify. If the understanding can be trusted in anything, it may be trusted here. Christ was not an after-thought of the All-wise. Neither were sin and sorrow, which make Christ a necessity in human life, things outside the divine expectation. Jehovah was not disappointed in his world, or in the race he made to inhabit it. He saw the end from the beginning; otherwise, he were not God. If, in view of the end which he foresaw, he had not willed the existence both of the world and the race, it is perfectly safe to say that neither would have been created. For some reason, then, it is most clear that God wished—so to say—such a world as this, and such a race as man. Of this, there need be no doubt. But why was this? Why should Infinite Perfection desire an imperfect world, and a sinning, suffering race? Some things we may see, though others lie beyond our widest vision. Let us reverently try to ascertain what is fairly within our horizon. (1) It is plain enough, I think, that constituted as man is now, this world is, in every way, a fit home for him. He is made to gather knowledge from experience. Whatever *a priori* judgments and native tendencies he may bring with him into this world, it is certain that he brings no actual knowl-

edge. The vast possibilities of his being, as we are beginning to comprehend them, can only be developed through experience. To such a being, life in our world is a discipline, a training-school for something still beyond. This seems to be simple enough, and it is safe to hold that the present order of things can be explained in no other way. Either this, or "the world is indeed a mighty maze," utterly "without a plan." Now, what seems highest in man is, evermore, the product of suffering. It may well be admitted that what is sometimes called Egoism, Self-love, is not without its real uses. But, then, no one regards it as man's highest distinction. What a certain school of thinkers contrast with it under the name of Altruism is universally regarded as a much grander attribute. Surely no one can hesitate here. Selfishness—that is what comes directly out of the animal in man. It is what other animals have in development quite as perfect as he. It is, therefore, not a thing for him to boast of. But Altruism! sympathy with others, regard for the happiness and well-being of others! this is man's brightest crown. Now, constituted as man is, this feeling which gives him kinship with heaven, is largely the product of suffering. This is the law, possibly, of its genesis; certainly, of its growth. But it cannot be doubted that, in Christ, the Altruistic element in human nature has gained a dignity and elevation not possible under any other conditions. This, however, has not reversed, or set aside, the fixed law of its development. In a world without suffering, it is perfectly clear that

Altruism could have had no sufficient theater for its activities; and it is equally clear that, without such a theater, its development in the race must have been prematurely arrested. It is not possible for one who has never known sorrow, to enter profoundly into the sorrows of others. It is the memory of your own painful experiences, my brother, that enables you to take up, as if it were your own, the burden of other souls. Think a moment, and you will say, "Yes, that is so." Even the Son of God, we read in Scripture, was "made perfect" for his Mediatorial work through the discipline of suffering. Such is the meaning in part, doubtless, of long nights spent, in mountain solitudes, in prayer to God. This explains, too, the tears and blood-sweat in "sad Gethsemane." It seems plain, then, that the whole side of our nature which impels to humanitarian effort, which enables us to enter into close relation with sorrow and suffering—from whatever cause—throughout the world, which leads us to toil willingly, and to make free sacrifice for the alleviation of others' woes, and the righting of others' wrongs, can only attain satisfactory development in an environment which supplies the conditions of its beneficent activities. There are those who have followed doing good to others, until the love of such a consecration has become a passion stronger than the love of life. And so it is perfectly safe to conclude that man's highest attainments, in this best field of his earthly activities, is conditioned by suffering. That this is so, I do not feel even the shadow of a doubt. And in this way,

we reach the conclusion that, if the All-wise Jehovah desired, for any worthy cause, as Infinite Wisdom regards worthiness, a race of beings like man in his universe, this is the sort of world he would place him in, that his life might be crowned with its most glorious fruitage. I cannot think there is a flaw in this reasoning.

(2) But the question, why did God desire the presence of man in his universe? still remains. There is a sole conceivable reason within the range of our human horizon. All God's creative acts must reflect, in some measure, his divine perfections. God can do nothing contrary to himself, unlike himself. In a universe peopled with intelligences created by himself, God must ever seek some adequate expression of his nature and character. It is impossible to conceive of him without the desire of such self-revelation, or without means looking to its accomplishment. Now there is one whole side of the Divine Nature, it is perfectly safe to say, which never could have been revealed in a universe where there was neither sin nor suffering. I say sin nor suffering, because, in concrete existence, I am totally unable to separate them. Sorrow is in this world, as I see it, and as I think Scripture teaches, because sin is here; and in a world without sin, I feel very sure that "no sorrow would be found." Be this as it may, I am best satisfied so to regard it. Now sin and suffering are both in God's universe, let us not doubt, because God's self-revelation to finite intelligences, in any adequate degree, was not possible

without their presence. This is the sole satisfying explanation within the range at least of our earthly vision. But this does satisfy. For as there could be no theatre for the development of man's Altruistic nature without the condition of suffering, so it is plain there could be no place for the expression of God's infinite compassion, tender mercy, divine sympathy, or his royal prerogative of forgiveness, in a universe without sin, and the suffering never absent where sin is found. Such a world as this, and such a race as ours, supply the conditions necessary to God's revelation of himself to the intelligences which people his universe. So, beyond doubt, Paul understood it. Listen to him: "To me, who am less than the least of all saints, was this grace given, to preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and to make all men see what is the dispensation of the mystery which from all ages hath been hid in God who created all things; *to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in the heavenly places might be made known through the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus, our Lord.*" This is very plain. God's wisdom in the order of our world is known only in Christ, and, but for sin and suffering, there had been no place for Christ's redemptive work. This dark background of sin and sorrow was necessary in order to display to our adoring gaze the mysteries of redeeming love. As we stand here, wrapt in the embrace of the Infinite Goodness, the impenetrable

mists which have hitherto enveloped this mighty problem of evil in our world, begin to disappear. The wisdom of the Infinite God discloses itself, in part at least, to our eager eyes. I do not offer these reasonings as the sufficient data for a complete solution. I freely admit that they fall short of that mark. But from the point of view here gained, this whole scene of created things is so wonderfully lighted up, that we no longer doubt whether a solution is possible. We are sure it is possible, and not even far away. This mighty drama of human life, in its multiplicity of historical detail, and in its ultimate issue, was in the mind of God, and part of his plan, from the depths of eternity. Infinite wisdom could not have afforded to encounter infinite risk. Infinite wisdom, indeed, took no risk. The outcome was seen, and accepted as satisfactory. Some things are uncertain; not this. It could not have been otherwise.

Standing here, dear brethren, and gazing steadfastly into the infinite azure before us, there cannot but come to us the feeling that one step further will bring the solution of the world's greatest problem fairly within our intellectual horizon. A single postulate, if it were permitted us, would clear up the entire field, and make the explanation positively complete. But pardon me, if I have excited curious expectation. I shall postulate nothing. Why should I? I am only a pigmy, standing now, indeed, upon this mountain summit, to whose sublime height I have slowly and anxiously toiled, and straining my eager

gaze into the illimitable fields which spread out before me, in the hope of catching glimpses of the golden glory reflected from the far-away "delectable hills!" In the vast depths of this mighty circumference, I cannot be sure that things are precisely what they seem to my anxious eyes. Why should I venture to tell how they seem? Yet, how can I quite refuse to tell? Let me say this: I dare not dogmatize on grounds of my own finite understanding, and yet, I cannot wholly resist its most weighty representations. But I can wait, content, the revelations of the great day. The words of Jesus are certain to be true in their outcome. If there be no strife between these words and the half-revealed vision of my own poor understanding, it is well. If strife seem to exist, I must wait on, to the end. Meantime, is it not plain that the traditional eschatology no longer satisfies the demands of reason, or the ethical consciousness of the most enlightened men? It is no longer the heretics only who are dissatisfied. Some of the most evangelical theologians of the age are among the recalcitrant. What means the school of Dorner in Germany, of Maurice, and Robertson and Farrar, in England, and last, though not least, that of "The New Orthodoxy," of which the Andover professors are among the leading advocates, on our own side of the Atlantic? There can be but the one meaning which I have given. The dissatisfaction is even more wide-spread than really appears. Hundreds of true men carry their doubts, and say nothing, because they love their brethren, and hate strife. It may not

be possible to forecast the future with much certainty. The present tendency in certain quarters may prove only an eddy soon to be lost sight of, or it may widen and deepen into a mighty current which shall sweep resistlessly along its way. God knows. In any event we must expound the word of God in the light of all the certain truth which has found its way into our souls. All truth is divine, because all truth is of God. Of all the precious texts in Holy Scripture none have been more precious to me than these oft-quoted words of Second Isaiah: "Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief; when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hands. *He shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied.*" This is Messianic beyond all doubt. To us, this means Jesus. What inspiring words, brethren, are here: "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied." He shall recall every experience, every conflict with the tempter, every tear and every pang, and, looking upon the countless hosts of the redeemed, he shall say, "It is enough; I am content with the purchase of my blood." Jesus is to be "satisfied." How that word thrills one's whole being. "He shall be satisfied." And if the Master is content, we shall be content too. In this inspiring faith, we can labor and wait. The mists shall finally clear away. The wisdom and goodness of the Eternal shall be fully manifested. The end shall shed an effulgence of glory over all

stages of the progress, and the revolving æons of the limitless hereafter shall show forth the praises of him that hath redeemed us. We may not be authorized to say certainly how many shall be saved, but we know that our Lord shall be "satisfied." This is enough. Now unto him that hath loved us, and washed us from our sins, to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and power, before all time, and now, and forevermore. Amen.

"THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE REMISSION OF SINS."

BY C. A. HEDRICK.

[The thoughts presented in this paper, were delivered extempore, at Columbia, during the late Convention of the Missouri Lectureship, and have since been written out and somewhat enlarged and revised.

C. A. H.]

Accepting the place on the programme of this lectureship assigned to Bro. A. B. Jones, puts me in a somewhat undesirable position. It is always an unpleasant thing to be called on to occupy the time and perform the work of a gifted man, and more especially when one is compelled to attempt the task without the least special preparation. I hope you will bear with me, therefore, while we shall try to occupy the time.

The theme chosen for me by your worthy committee is, "The Philosophy of the Remission of Sins." A theme truly worthy of a philosopher; one that has caused many a heart to ache, and many a brain to reel and stagger. And shall we hope to have a calm sea and a clear sky for our voyage, in this ocean of difficulty? We will let the sequel reveal.

It will be necessary for us to premise a few facts and principles to aid us in this investigation.

(1) The laws of God with which we have to do, in all the departments of thought, whether physical

or metaphysical, are self-acting or self-executive. There is residing in all natural law a principle which produces its own effects, whether good or bad; and this according to the nature of the action. The potency of God's law is "*ab-intra*" and not "*ab-extra*" as is the case in all human laws.

Were we to thrust our hand into the fire, and thus violate the law of our physical being, we would suffer pain.

Or, were we to take deadly poison, the principle inhering in the natural law would assert itself and death would follow; not by an act of God's power "*ab-extra*," as supplementing the potency of the fire or poison, but by an ever-present principle residing in the laws violated.

(2) All truth is a unit, whether it be moral or scientific, physical or metaphysical; it must ever be the same unbroken unit. Whatever of truth we are able to know or understand, whatever comes within the field of our apprehension, will serve as a basis from which we will be able to make our calculations.

If the questions of our inquiry be in the regions of the unseen, lying outside of our experience, we can only know certainly by following the known, and relying on the suggestions of analogy for the truthfulness of our conclusions. For it is "through the known, and only through the known, that we may learn the things unknown."

The power of the truth to liberate the soul from the bondage of sin, may be seen in the words of Jesus to his disciples: "If ye continue in my words,

then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." John 8: 31, 32.

The power to free these trusting disciples was residing in that truth, which they would learn by discipleship, and not in their Master's sovereignty.

(3) It is important to the solution of the problem now before us, that we keep in view the object of God's moral government. If we should fail to apprehend the true purpose of his rule over the intelligent universe, how shall we be able to attain to any accurate knowledge concerning the laws by which this object shall be secured. That God seeks the salvation of his children, is abundantly proven by all things within the range of human thought. And to accomplish this great object, means were necessary, as it must be essentially a fellowship, and not an act of sovereignty. We should, hence, interpret any part or parts which we may have occasion to examine, so as not to lose sight of this one great purpose of the Father.

(4) We now come to inquire for the principle on which the Heavenly Father administers his government over his children. As there are but two on which a government can be founded, viz., the arbitrary and the moral, it will be necessary for us to examine these.

(a) Arbitrary power is that which proceeds from the will of a king or sovereign, independent of the nature of things, having no foundation except in the will of the ruler. "Might makes right," is the only

reason for the existence of his laws. Any command he might give would be right, therefore.

This principle would make virtue to consist as much in an impure as a pure act. Error would supersede truth, and sin would become righteousness, if only the king so commanded. The highest expression of virtue would be obedience to the commands of the king, though they might contradict our own nature. This would imply a lack of harmony, and show finiteness in the sovereign. It will not do to conceive of God as creating man with a nature and then making it a virtue for him to war against that nature. This we must reject as unworthy of a kind and righteous Heavenly Father.

(b) The moral principle is that which grows out of the nature of things; an ever-present quality, inhering in the law. Only that which *is right* is the foundation of the commandment. It is that which inheres in all things and defines their relation to one another. It could never be right, under any circumstances, for us to lie, steal, or commit murder. Not because God has commanded us not to do these things, but because our relation to each other makes it wrong. We hence conclude that a wise, good and loving Father, governing his own children for their highest good, would only use such things as are right and are correlated to their nature. It follows, then, that the rule of our Heavenly Father is moral, and not arbitrary.

With these premises before us, we come at once to our theme, and here let us remove the sandals

from our feet, for we are conscious, brethren, of standing in the presence of a large and difficult problem. You will not be surprised, therefore, if we should come short of a full and satisfactory solution.

When our Lord sent forth his apostles to accomplish this great work of salvation, he said, "Whosesoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, and whosesoever sins ye retain they are retained." John 20 : 23. The power to remit sins was given to the apostles, not by special gift, as by superhuman endowment, but as a power which inheres in the nature of the work they were to do. They were to preach the gospel to every creature, and its effect on the sinner was to remit his sins, or save him from the love and practice of sin. If the same gospel be preached to-day, will it not have a like power to remit sin? The apostles could not have had any sovereign power over sin more than the preachers of to-day; and surely Protestants would claim no such power.

Let us next inquire, What is sin? that we may know when and how it is remitted. In coming to the Bible for a definition, we are met with the fact that the Bible is not a glossary, and we shall have to read between the lines if we find the object of our search. In 1 John 3 : 4 he says, "Sin is the transgression of the law." It is certainly this, but it is *much more* than this. First, because sin was in the world before the law came. "The law" found its statute form in the fact that *sin was;* hence the law

was given or revealed to manifest sin. Paul, in Rom. 7 : 7, says : "Nay, I had not known sin but by the law." It is here shown to be the revealer, and not the creator, of sin. It was further intended to reveal the penalty that must follow the violation of law. See Rom. 2 : 2. Here we are told that "they that have sinned without *the law* should perish without the law." This presents very forcibly the consequences of sin, though the subject was ignorant of the fact that he had sinned. Again, Jesus said, "He that looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery already with her in his heart." John says, "He that hateth his brother *is a murderer*." From these Scriptures we learn that sin is in the heart, and it is only the workings of sin we see in the life. If God takes cognizance of sin in the heart, and declares such an one a murderer or an adulterer, then surely there can be no escape from a "just recompense of reward," though the circumstances may never favor the developing of the thoughts of the heart into life.

The will of God, being an expression of his own moral constitution, and grounded on the nature of things, is the law of right. Whosoever, therefore, contravenes the Divine will, whether known or unknown, is a sinner. Jesus said, "Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life."

"I will," said Jesus, "but ye will not." This is the great battle field of life; the will of God, and the will of man, contending for the mastery. Righteousness, then, is found in man, whenever his will is

submerged in the will of God; when he can say in truth, "Thy will, O God, be done." Now as the righteousness of God is revealed in the gospel to destroy sin in the heart, and to bring man's wayward life into communion with God, follows it not, then, that when the apostles preached the gospel to sinners, and they, "hearing, believed and were baptized," that their sins were remitted by the apostles? We now come to consider the condition of the sinner, and the sufficiency of the gospel to meet his wants in every respect. In speaking of the condition of the sinner, Dr. Young says: "To an enlightened, awakened and thoroughly earnest man, the great and stern reality is this, that he has deeply wronged his God, and as deeply wronged his own being. God endowed him with a spiritual nature, gave it sacredly into his charge, and he is conscious that he has neglected and injured it, perhaps irreparably injured it, by separating it from the one source of purity and life and joy. He is always from his God in thought and in affection, and this willful severance, he has come to know, is death to his higher self. The thing he most needs, is not *pardon*, but to be changed, thoroughly changed, in himself. To be set really right; his face and his heart turned toward God."

The potency of the gospel is found in its adaptation to the wants of the human soul. It fills it with new objects, turns its thoughts and feelings away from the old haunts of sin, puts a new spirit in the man and rightens his movements in the direction of Christ. The whole problem of life is solved in the

revelation of truth, and man finds in its duties the complement of his own nature; in a word, "old things have passed away, behold, all things have become new."

In this transition, let no one imagine that the fountain of sin will be purified all at once; it will take time to eradicate all of the impurity from the heart and life. Sin will not die soon or easy, but will require many a hard-fought battle before we can say, we have gotten the victory.

If they who are forgiven much, love much, then there will be ground of rejoicing even for the greatest sinner that may be restored. The basis of our much love, must be found in the things we have suffered.

> "All common good has common price:
> Exceeding good, exceeding;
> Christ bought the keys of Paradise
> By cruel bleeding."

The more we suffer for any object, the more we love it. In this way our appreciation is awakened by the comparative view we are able to make under this kind of experience. The restoration of a soul to its normal condition, therefore, must be a process, and not an act of sovereignty. The first trustful look of a sinner toward Christ, is a death-blow at sin in the heart, and is the beginning of this process, which will be consummated in the last wrench of expiring life.

Let us now consider the words commonly employed in religious nomenclature to express this state or condition contemplated in our theme. The first

of these is the word "*pardon*." This is thought, by many, to express what God does for the sinner, when he turns to Christ in obedience. Let us see. The word is forensic, and signifies the remission of penalty. This would necessitate the use of arbitrary power. It defines an act of a king or sovereign toward a criminal, and is the removing of the penalty, but has no reference whatever to the moral condition of the subject. Pardon cannot change the mental condition or remove the love of sin from the heart, as this can only be done by the choice of the sinner himself.

The act of pardon leaves untouched the cause from which crime comes, and therefore cannot in any way save the subject from sinning; it cannot take away the fact of sin, or the desire, and we have already learned that the penalty will most certainly follow. Where, then, in the moral government of God, can there be found a place for the action of pardon? For this reason, no doubt, the term does not occur in the New Testament. The pardon of a criminal is a violation of the principle on which the law rests. If A were to kill a man, under our State laws, to maintain justice, according to the basic principle, he would be hanged until he was dead. Now if the governor were to pardon him, he would violate the principle which the law was intended to make effective, and which he has sworn to maintain. Justice, according to the principle in the law, has not been met, and the governor says it shall not be met by saying, A shall not die.

Under moral law there can be no possible escape from the penalty, because of the self-acting power inhering in sin. So it will always be true, "the soul that sins shall die." Die it must, because it has contravened the will of God. How shall we believe God to be just, merciful and good, if he by an act destroy the very ground of right and justice? Moses said, "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth," "Hand for hand, and life for life." If this be justice, pardon can neither be right nor good. That which man needs in his fallen state is not a *pardon* from the penalties of a life of sin and wickedness, but a salvation from the causes which led to such a life; a Savior—one who can lead his heart away from the love of sin to the love of righteousness, giving a salvation from the causes of suffering. "I come," said Jesus, "to seek and to save that which is lost." "If every transgression and disobedience," under Mosaism, "*received* a just recompense of reward," surely we will not escape a like justice, for we have to do with the same unchangeable God. Pardon, then, leaves the moral condition unchanged —the cause from which crime comes remains—the subject is no better, morally, than before. He may at any time repeat the sinful act, and hence have need of a continuing pardon—something like the Pope's indulgences, that would take away all fear of penalty.

All must see that this pardoning of sinners, instead of destroying the love of sin, would, on the contrary, only increase the potency in the human soul to sin,

the fear of penalty being removed, in the belief that Christ is a kind of "scape-goat," to carry away the penalty due our sins. It is conceded "that law is an idle jest without its penalty." In view of all these facts, we conclude that God cannot pardon a sinner, as this looks only to the penalty and never to the sin or cause; and it is this that God seeks to remit, that it may cause no more suffering in his children.

We next come to the words "forgive" and "forgiveness." Here we shall hope to find something more definite. In the New Testament it will be seen that forgiveness by God, and forgiveness by man, are set forth mutually; one by the help of the other. "Forgiving one another, even as God in Christ hath forgiven you." "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us." One, and only one, kind of forgiveness. Here one act of forgiveness matches and interprets the other. They have a common nature; they reach the same point, and require the same preparation and conditions.

What, then, is forgiveness? Is it simply to pronounce the words, "I forgive you?" It would seem that some have no higher conception than this, when we hear such expressions as, "I forgive, but I can't forget," or, "I forgive you, but I want nothing more to do with you."

Some appear to regard forgiveness as a kind of method to rid themselves of an enemy or an offending brother. In the feelings of those thus acting, there has been no change, no softening of heart

toward the enemy or brother; neither have they been brought to a reconciled state, but remain cold and indifferent as before. How, then, must we act toward an enemy, so as to forever sweeten the bitterness of our wounded feelings and leave no sense of personal revulsion? To me there is but one conceivable answer, but one way to reach this much desired point. There is nothing that will accomplish a real and true forgiveness but the *making of cost;* that is, some true, real sacrifice for the enemy or sinner—to make such *cost* in the endeavor to restore such an one to friendship and love. Such cost will (if it be great and made for the object above stated) temper and liquefy our reluctant nature and will at the same time be our propitiation. Just so it must be with all moral natures. When God *gives* or *makes cost* for his children, he is propitiating his feelings toward us according to the greatness of the gift, and he becomes reconciled. But how do these gifts effect us? In what way will they do us good? As very much that is necessary to a clear understanding of this whole question rests just here, it may be well to be at some pains to illustrate.

Let us take the parable of the debtors. In this parable, one was brought before his lord who "owed him ten thousand talents." He having nothing wherewith to pay his lord, asked for mercy. "The lord of that servant was moved with compassion," and loosed him and forgave him the debt, or gave him the money, which is the same thing; thus making cost for the relief of his servant. The condi-

tions in the case are, desire and inability on the part of the servant, and compassion or love on the part of his lord. His lord, seeing his great need, was moved with "compassion," to make cost—sacrifice—to the amount of "ten thousand talents." Here we have an exhibition of the labor of love—how love suffers for another; its willingness to make cost where there is hope of redeeming one from suffering. Like this poor servant, we were in great need, having nothing wherewith to indemnify our Lord, and having great desire. God was moved to *make the gift for us*. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." As the gift of talents was intended to meet the wants of the servant, and save him from the pending woe, so the "unspeakable gift" of God was designed to meet the wants of his helpless and sinful children. But this large gift of money failed to cause in its recipient a reciprocal flow of love toward his fellow-servant, but niggardly demanded the "hundred pence" that he owed him. Just so God's great *gift for us* often fails to awaken in our own hearts a reciprocal flow of soul into sweet coalescence with the Divine will.

In the gift of Jesus for the sins of the world, humanity has been complemented in its entirety, so that no want is felt that has not been supplied. These wonderful manifestation of the Father find their true object in the remission of sins. Jesus said to the apostles, "Freely ye have received, freely give." In

the apostles' giving, they had nothing but "the gospel, the power of God unto salvation," to bestow upon the world. Thus they remitted the sins of the believer and retained the sins of the unbeliever. To the one, "it was a savor of life unto life;" to the other, "a savor of death unto death," clearly verifying the moral agency of man in the remission of his sins, and the dual power of every gift of God.

Since sin resides in the heart, and to remit means to send back or away, then must the heart be reached by new and better motives or objects ("for out of the heart are the issues of life"), if sin be remitted or sent away therefrom. Since only moral or motive power can effect or change the heart of a sinner, God, to remit sins from the heart, must furnish such a power. But will an act of sovereignty meet this want in the heart of the sinner? Will any occult power, here or in heaven, produce this desired change? Surely no one acquainted with the mental structure of man will think so, but will see the need of some intelligent proposition which the heart can understand and appreciate, before it will leave its old haunts of sin for a new home of righteousness.

All this is found in the gospel of Christ, which the apostles preached, under the commission they received from the Lord. From a willing obedience to the gospel, there arises in human life, by the reaction of forces, a condition which we call salvation; not a salvation from the effects of sin heretofore reigning in the heart, save it be in this, that the *new power* that now reigns in the heart, will ere long so repair

the ruin wrought by sin as to help the soul to righten itself from under the power and dominion of sin.

Let one be stricken down with some painful and deadly disease, which must end in irretrievable death if no antidote be given; but let the antidote be applied, the disease is stayed and remitted—sent away—so that the patient recovers—is saved. Would any one say the patient did not suffer? was not impaired by the attack? that the effects of the disease were all remitted? There was indeed a staying or stopping of the ravages of the disease, so that it did not reach its ultimatum, yet not without greatly damaging the patient and producing conditions which are irreparable. Just so is the working of sin in the human soul. It may be arrested by the gospel, and the sinner saved from the ultimate effects, but certainly never from that dwarfed and scarred condition which sin wrought by its hellish work on the soul.

The freedom of the soul cannot exceed in degree the knowledge of the truth as it relates to human conduct. For how shall the truth unperceived, and therefore unpracticed, liberate from sin? It cannot be said in this age that the ignorant are free, therefore, "if ignorance were bliss, it were folly to be wise." The only way to civilize and save the world is to teach, preach the truth, and enlighten the people. Show them the truth vitalized in human character, and its power will draw all men to it. The Mormon accepts the Christ as the Son of God, and as such he obeys him to the extent of his knowledge. Is he therefore free from the sin of polyg-

amy? Is it not ignorance, then, that enthralls him and keeps him in the bond of iniquity? We hence conclude that we must *know* the truth in order to enjoy its blessed influence.

There is a "Scholastic Theology" that accounts the sinner as righteous, "for Christ's sake." All the righteousness that men can have, say they, "is imputed" to them by the Heavenly Father "for Christ's sake." This, say they, "God does because Christ atoned for their sins, in the sense of suffered in their room and stead." We find this doctrine expressed in the hymns and songs of this class of philosophers:

"Jesus paid it all,
All to him I owe;
Sin has left a crimson stain,
He washed it white as snow."

Again,

"On the cruel cross he suffered,
Paid the debt and set me free."

The phrase, "for Christ's sake," as representing God's action toward men, does not occur in the New Testament, when correctly translated. In Ephesians 4:32, where this phrase occurs, the words are "*en Christo*" and are rendered in the New Version, "in Christ." Certain it is, that Christ in no sense can be satisfaction to a law broken not by himself, but by the sinner. It would be injustice for Christ to bear the re-action of principles when he had not violated them. The law that could accept suffering as the penalty of sin, would be, in the highest sense, arbitrary, and, therefore, super-added. But, says the advocate of this philosophy, "Did not Jesus bear our

griefs and carry our sorrow? Was he not wounded for our transgression? Was he not bruised for our iniquities, and chastised for our peace, and are we not healed by his stripes?" To all these we can say, yes; but we prefer to interpret for ourselves. The limits of this paper forbid more than a mere hint in that direction. Let us give one illustration of this "stock chapter," as it has been fittingly called. Let "C" represent the father of a family. He is a drunkard, yet he is loved much by his wife and children. When drunk, he beats and abuses them, he causes them to suffer shame and contempt, poverty and want; in a word, all the iniquities of a drunken fiend. All the suffering of his family does not mitigate his drunkenness, only so far as their love moves him to leave off his great sin. Now they suffer all this that they may reclaim him from the error of drunkenness. They "bear his griefs and carry his sorrows;" they are "bruised for his iniquities and chastised for his peace;" and if he be healed at all it will be by their "stripes." All this love looks toward the saving of this wicked husband and father. Just so with Christ; he was righteous and men were wicked. They sought to destroy him and put him out of their way; for they said, "If we let this fellow alone, all men will believe on him, and then the Romans will come and take away our nation." In this way Jesus suffered for us, because he loved us and sought to save us. It is further argued, "that it was necessary for Christ to die thus, to meet the ends or purposes of the Divine government; to satisfy the

claims of the law that had been violated by man, and to repair the damage thereof." The law of God could not be damaged by any one. The law is its own sheriff and will always inflict the just recompense of reward on the culprit. Hence, there was nothing in the death of Christ that looked law-ward or Godward. Its influence was manward. There was in man a psychological nature whose demands could only be met by a full and clear presentation of the two possibilities in that nature, and these were complemented in the death and resurrection of Christ.

Jesus said to his apostles just before he took his leave, "Thus it is written and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." Luke 24:46, 47. In this passage there are two things declared to be necessary on the part of Christ in order to the remission of sins.

(1) To reveal within human limitations the will of God and the reward of righteousness. Man would not be persuaded to turn to the right until he should see by faith the final outcome. To meet this want, Christ lived in this world under the limits and conditions of man, developing our possibilities under the most severe and difficult circumstances that ever befell our race, and arose from the dead, by which he "brought life and immortality to light."

(2) It was also declared to be necessary for

Christ to suffer. This was to reveal the other pole of human possibility, that man might have a clear view of the destiny of the sinner, to awaken the fear element in his nature. All obedience begins in fear and is consummated in love. It was hence important that man should see by faith the final outcome of a sinner. God, having shown through the dispensation of Moses the immutability of the physical law, until its subjects greatly feared and quaked, it remained for Christ to draw aside the curtain from the unseen and permit man to get one glimpse of a soul in the agonies of banishment from God. This he did when on the cross he cried, "*Eli Eli lama sabachthani.*" Thus the future, both of suffering and rejoicing, is brought within the reach of every one, so he can make his own intelligent choice. The influence of these grand and awful truths have moved on the human race, and its power has drawn many an one to Christ and driven sin from their hearts, thus saving them from not only the suffering, from the "banishment from God and the glory of his power," but from much suffering here. Sin begins to punish as soon as committed, and righteousness to reward or save as soon as practiced. So then in the gospel of Christ we have the problem of life fully solved; meeting all the wants of man in every possible condition. The object of Christ's death and suffering is not, then, to satisfy or mend a broken law, or to meet a want in the Father—to indemnify God for the sins of the world,—but to express in the most effective and potent way possible his great love for his

children, doing everything with a view to draw and restore them back to the true, the beautiful and the good. To redeem their hearts from the love and practice of sin by the exceeding loveliness of his gift and the hope of the gospel. If Moses could "esteem the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt," because he "had respect unto the recompense of reward," surely "the hope of the gospel" is no mean factor in the righting of a sinner. Thus we can understand how faith leads to remission; how the reward of righteousness, set forth in the resurrection of Christ, and the glory that followed, can quicken our hearts in proportion to our faith, making us willing to do anything to reach the divine goal. So man becomes reconciled, atoned, rightened, forgiven and saved. The power of love seen in God's great gift reaches his heart, remits his sins and rightens his thoughts and life.

Finally: In the process of recovering man from his sinful condition, we have found principles to be unvarying and potent to react, both in rewarding and punishing. We have found truth to be the residence of these principles when vitalized by the election of man. We have seen that cause and effect are different things in the process of development and growth, ending in the salvation of man; that Christianity is the moral complement of human nature, and not arbitrary. We have found sin to reside in the heart, and to be displaced only by the will of God, as revealed in the gospel of Christ; this egress of sin and ingress of right, to be in proportion to the knowledge

of faith. We have found, as the object of God in man is reached, he becomes propitiated in feeling toward the sinner as the sinner's will is submerged in his own, just as the sinner takes on new forms of life, and as the other pole of character is being touched. We have found that the ground of rejoicing and appreciating lies in the comparative view presented in the life, death and resurrection of Christ, enabling us to see the value of those things "which the angels desired to look into," and to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

THE CHURCH IN ITS RELATION TO THE STATE.

BY J. A. BROOKS.

How intimate is this relation, the pages of human history abundantly show. Down through the ages the kingdom of God and the kingdom of men have come side by side—sometimes in deadly conflict, the kingdom of this world vainly endeavoring to exterminate the kingdom of Christ; sometimes in an unholy alliance, more deadly in its influence than the antagonisms of preceding generations; sometimes in their normal condition, when the church has earnestly endeavored through her mighty moral influence to purify, exalt and reclaim the kingdom of this world to God and his Christ. In the effort to determine these distinctive periods, or the force of evil and good that entered into these conflicts, I have not, as I humbly conceive, an extremely difficult task. If there be any obscurity in the teachings of Christ and his apostles, the study of the centuries in the light of historical development, has, in my humble judgment, cleared it all away.

The postulate from which I begin this investigation is the truth that these kingdoms, as that of Christ, are ordained of God. Romans 13:1: "Let every soul be in subjection to the higher powers; for there

is no power but of God; and the powers that be are ordained of God." The necessary existence of these governments, then, is founded in the will of God, and the good of mankind.

The apostle is logically correct when he demands obedience to them. The Master himself directed attention to the same postulate when he commanded the wicked Pharisee, "To render therefore unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's." Luke 20:25. But are there no limitations to this obligation to obedience in both kingdoms? Clearly there could not be if perfect will and intelligence ruled in both. In the theocracy, where the two were blended in one, and the infinite God was the one Autocrat, perfect and unquestioned obedience was always demanded. Under the Jewish kingdom, instituted in rebellion against God, and yet ordained of him, the human finite and therefore imperfect element, entered into the question, and a new condition of case at once arose.

Imperfections in government were soon made manifest. Yea, imperfections, which at once must meet with the divine displeasure, and introduce conflict between governments, the righteous condition of which should be unity and peace. But whence comes this disturbing element? Is it from the Perfect One who ordained these governments, or from the sinful nature of those to whom he had intrusted their administration?

I am now prepared to present my second postulate. Had the Jewish kingdom been administered by those

at one with God, or were the kingdoms of earth to-day ruled by those at one with Christ, these conflicts could not exist. It follows then, logically, that if these kingdoms have antagonized the church, it is because of these sinful administrations, and not in their origin from one common source; because they are administered in harmony with the spirit of the world, and in antagonism with the spirit of Christ. When, then, they have been at enmity with, and persecuted the Church of, God, it is because the sinful and selfish spirit of the world, rather than the spirit of Christ, has dominated their interests.

Though ordained of God, they have all, by means of sinful human nature, entered into alliance, offensive and defensive, with Satan, and are therefore his kingdoms by right of conquest. The consciousness of this fact inspired Satan, when in the mount of temptation he offered them all to Christ upon the recognition of his rightful authority. On the other hand, the Master, while recognizing only his usurped authority, calls him "the prince of this world."

I am not unconscious of the fact that some of my critics will hesitate to acknowledge the personal agency of these two great rulers in the world, and while the extended investigation of this question does not come within the scope of this paper, I will be permitted to say that, if we are justified in accepting the presence of a personal Ruler directing the affairs of the kingdom of Christ, because of its vast, intelligent and beneficent purposes, designed for the good of humanity, we may with equal certainty accept

the former supposition, if we stop but a moment to gather up the evidence of almost infinite wisdom manifest in the designs of evil unfolded down the ages. It must have taken more than human wisdom to divine the complicated machinery of evil ever present in human history, shifting itself to meet every changed condition of society with a readiness and wisdom approximating even divine prescience.

Without attempting, then, to argue the question, but relying upon the plain statements of Scriptures, I shall assume in this paper a personal Devil and his personal influence in directing the kingdoms of the world.

This, our third postulate, being accepted, it follows that, while these kingdoms are in open alliance with the powers of darkness, there can be no legitimate union of church and state. Light and darkness, God and Baal, can have nothing in common.

Evil and good are in everlasting antagonism. The failure to recognize this all-important truth resulted in the union of church and state, with all its attendant horrors, as witnessed in Papal and Protestant persecutions, the supremacy of the great apostasy, the ignorance and barbarism of the dark ages, the present protest of Rome against all intellectual and moral freedom, and the difficulties environing the established churches of England and Germany.

The kingdom of Christ cannot, on the one hand, call upon wicked kingdoms of the world to enforce its religious tenets, nor can it, on the other hand, assume the responsibilities of all the wickedness per-

petrated by these states in its holy name. To do either is to prostitute its holy powers to infamous purposes, and to bring ultimate destruction upon both the church and state. There can be no union of church and state until these latter become the kingdoms of our God and his Christ.

The consummation of this union of church and state was Satan's master-stroke in the inauguration of the great apostasy. To it are to be attributed all the evils of the dark ages, the enslavement of the human mind, the corruption of the primitive faith, the darkness of the Papal night, the horrors of the Inquisition, the fatal night of St. Bartholomew, the untold suffering of the Dissenter in England and the Quaker in New England. Its history is written in twelve centuries of darkness, blood, desolation and death. But this period belongs to the past. The work of the reformation of the sixteenth century was, pre-eminently, to forever dissolve this unholy alliance and again to restore the relation of church and state to its primitive and normal condition. The past, in this respect, can never be repeated in human history.

We turn then to the normal relation of church and state. That the end of God's purpose is that these kingdoms shall ultimately become the kingdom of God and his Christ is, I believe, the teaching of the Word.

The prophet, in his glorious vision of the kingdoms of earth, saw one after the other rise in its pride and fall in its shame. The mighty lords of Babylon, Greece and Rome, while, in truth, they were build-

ing monuments of human vanity and sin, the glory and shame of which should be a warning to the centuries unborn, yet vainly dreamed that they were erecting dynasties, which in their strength would withstand the shock of all the ages.

The prophet, with larger forecast, saw, one by one, the suns of their destiny set forever, and a kingdom rise and increase like a small stone cut without hands from the mountain-side, and roll on and on, until in its majesty it filled the whole earth with its power. See Daniel 2.

At the time designated that kingdom came. When the conquered nations had poured their treasures into the coffers of the eternal city, when her iron heel rested upon every land, and when she had wrung from the heart of humanity its bitterest wail of agony, then that kingdom, springing from the river-side of the mountain of Divine Love, began its work of reformation.

The end of its mission is seen in the closing prophecies of revelation. The friend of the king was permitted to see the end. The trumpets sounded in his hearing, and the conflicts of these kingdoms, fearfully and terribly grand, passed in panoramic vision before him, until the seventh trumpet sounded, "And there followed great voices in heaven and they said, the kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord and his Christ; and he shall reign forever and ever." Rev. 11:15.

Clearly, then, these kingdoms are to become the kingdoms of our God and his Christ.

That which Satan wrested from God by lying and deceitful power is to be restored through the all-conquering arm of the Lion of the tribe of Judah. But what is the relation of the church to this conflict, and what its influence in the purpose to wrest from Satan his usurped dominion?

In Daniel's vision it is the kingdom of Christ which is to break in pieces all these kingdoms and ultimately to restore the theocracy when the all-conquering arm of her victorious king shall have overcome the last enemy, and shall have "delivered up all things to the father." 1 Cor. 15 : 24. What, then, are the forces which the church shall employ in this conflict?

The symbol of one of these kingdoms is light; that of the other darkness. Light and darkness have nothing in common.

Of the church the Savior says, "Ye are the light of the world." Matt. 5 : 14. Again, John said of the Savior: "In him was life, and the life was the light of men." John 1 : 4.

The great mission, then, of the church is to carry that life and plant it in the heart of the individual that he may have the light. The individual then becomes the light of society to purify it and dissipate the darkness which sin has thrown around its pathway, and society gathered into churches, in turn carries this light into the kingdoms of earth, and perpetuates and reproduces the life of Christ, lighting up the world with his glory, and driving darkness from land to land, and realm to realm, winning na-

tion after nation from the power of Satan. That such a life, like leaven, permeating the component parts of society, should produce conflicts and antagonisms is inevitable. The life that arrays itself against the false religions, customs, and despotisms of all societies and kingdoms, must overturn these or itself perish from the land.

Every nation in which the kingdom of Christ has obtained a foothold, has its records of the conflicts indicated in these suggestions. Before the power of the principle underlying the divine kingdom, to-wit, the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of humanity, the despotisms of time, the divine right of kings, the inquisition, human slavery, the whisky traffic, and every other power of darkness must be banished. Under the wise management of a Gladstone, possibly these reformations may be accomplished without revolution and blood. If not, and tyrants or mistaken statesmanship obstruct the way, then a baptism of blood, the commune, or dynamite, must prepare the way for the assertion of a better and diviner influence.

The especial work of the church, in so far as these reformations are concerned, is, as I humbly conceive, to lay one hand upon these evils, and demand their abolition for the sake of humanity, and the other upon the turbulent and godless mass of human beings, restless under the evils they cannot avoid, and to counsel them to patience, until life and light shall have its perfect work.

The church can have no sympathy with the despot

who outrages human liberty, or the wretch who grows rich out of the miseries of society, nor yet with the assassin who murders his helpless victim upon the streets of Dublin, or springs a mine of dynamite upon the guilty and defenseless alike, either in London or Moscow.

As I humbly conceive, the Christian man is not left in darkness as to his duty to both church and state in this ceaseless conflict.

Says the Master: "Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's." You are citizens of both kingdoms. Both are ordained of God. You owe obligations to both. Be men and do your duty in both. No one-sided view is possible here. The King has spoken, and he is deaf who does not hear. Sophistry may blind the intellect and pride and stubbornness pervert the will, but that the Christian man must give to Cæsar his due as well as to God his, the King has determined forever.

Nor need the individual Christian be at any loss to know his duty to Cæsar's government. Is he simply a subject? Then let him be in subjection to the higher powers. Let him obey the constituted authority, whether a kingdom, an aristocracy or a democracy, for they "are ordained of God." But when either shall command at his hands that which shall conflict with his duty to the kingdom of Christ, then, like Peter, he shall elect to obey God rather than man. Acts 4: 19.

Is he Cæsar himself? Does he make and enforce

the law? Then let him be sure to make righteous laws and faithfully enforce them, for "he is a minister of God to thee for good" and "an avenger for wrath to him that doeth evil," Rom. 13.

Whether king or subject then, we cannot be mistaken as to our duty to human governments. As a citizen of this republic we are not only subjects, but by right of organic and statutory law, every one of us is a king, and since ordained of God as such, cannot, if we would, escape the obligations which are upon us.

Those who make and enforce the law are our servants, as were Festus and Agrippa servants of Cæsar.

As sovereigns in this republic, then, what is our duty as regards the making and execution of law? Shall we refuse to assert our will, sanctified by the will of Christ, and leave the unsanctified will of this world to make and execute the law? And if so, wherefore? Did an inspired apostle ever so command? Did Paul say to Agrippa, when almost persuaded, "I would that you were altogether persuaded," and that you would resign your office that you may become "such as I am, except these bonds?" Did Peter enjoin Cornelius to resign his commission in the Roman army when he was converted? Whence, then, in reason's name, came the thought that because a Christian, I must not render to Cæsar his dues? Was David sinning against God when he accepted the scepter at the hand of Samuel, or Washington, when, as commander of the little

army of the Colonies, he bowed upon the cold snow at Valley Forge and prayed with John Knox, "O God, give me victory or death?" Shall we say of that Christian statesman, whose hand guides England's ship of state to-night, and who is trying without blood to bury the almost lifeless corpse of Feudalism, and to rescue the church from its unholy wedlock with the world, step down and out, and let Salisbury into power, that he may baptize all England in the blood of the Commune? What fearful mistakes these Christian statesmen have made and are making. Why did not Christian officials resign and get out of the way that Rome might have murdered Luther, the Stuarts have slain Cromwell and stamped out Protestantism and religious liberty in England?

Why did not the Christian fathers of the republic resign their commission in the army and in congress and abandon the contest for religious and civil liberty? If Christ were on earth to-day and should see the terrible struggle of his church and the home against that mightiest source of evil, the whisky traffic, and should see on the one hand the defenseless mother and wife pleading with the remorseless fiend as he dragged their loved ones down to death and hell, all unmindful of human suffering and sorrow, and on the other, the fiend himself, cold, remorseless, wreaking in human blood, reveling amid the shrieks of the dying and damned, would he fold his arms and say to these mothers, "I can only help you by preaching to these fiends the gospel of love?" Or would he not, as one of the Cæsars of the realm,

chain this demon of death by the stony arm of Cæsar's law?

As the Lord liveth, I believe that to ask the question is to answer it.

If by his vote as a citizen of Cæsar's kingdom, the blessed Savior could lift the dark pall of sorrow off the human breast, with what joy he would cast that vote for God, home and native land.

I give it as my honest judgment, that of all delusions that ever haunted the human breast, that which forbids the citizen of Christ's kingdom from exercising the right of franchise in this republic, is the most groundless and unreasonable.

In the light of these considerations I am prepared to make the following conclusions :—

1. If, under the influence of sin in all its multiform manifestations in this country, our institutions and civilization should go down, it will be the fault of the church and her servants. The church in this country is almost irresistible in her moral influence, and when united in purpose, is well nigh omnipotent. With truth, home and God on her side, she has, when aroused and in earnest, the ability to accomplish the grandest results.

2. It is the duty of the church in her collective capacity not only to proclaim the truth of God, to hold it up before the world with pure heart and clean hands, but to condemn sin whether manifested in low or high places, and to declare her condemnation of it in the most formal and positive manner.

The evil influences now most dominant in our

country are the traffic in intoxicants ; the effort of some of our imported fellow-citizens to overturn our established customs and moral institutions, and to supplant them by the most objectionable features of the civilizations of Europe ; the abuse of the liberty allowed in this country to concoct nihilistic and dynamite plots for the destruction of life and property in other lands ; the bold declaration of deadly enmity to the institutions of the family, the home, and private property as advocated by imported nihilists and communists from Europe ; the soulless selfishness of capital on the one hand, and unreasonable complaints of labor on the other ; the enervating and sinful influence of luxury and lust as manifest throughout the land ; the dissemination and sale of licentious, immoral and corrupting literature, and the elevation of men into places of political trust who are possessed of the most vicious and immoral habits.

Are these evils denounced in the religious press and from the pulpits with that constant and persistent energy which their importance demands? I am bold to say that they are not. The press and the pulpit recognize these evils, but with rare exceptions do they bring all their power to bear against them.

Yielding to the vicious and unreasonable cry—that you must not bring politics into the pulpit, to the demands of the sensual and immoral elements that have crept into the church "unawares" and who do not wish to see their idols fall about their heads, or to have their minds turned in upon their own sinful lives, the timid preacher and editor indulge in plati-

tudes about popular evils which neither awaken the public conscience, nor disturb the sleeping sinner in the congregation of the Lord.

It will be admitted that dangers lie along the pathway of the faithful minister. It is easier for him to glide along offending no one's conscience, but what about the judgment? True it is, that to be faithful to God and humanity, may stir up the waters of sin in the church and disturb its peace, and the preacher's prospect of continuing in his place, but the divine law in nature and in grace is, first, purity, and then peacefulness. Like Luther and Wesley and Campbell, let us speak the truth if it disturb the peace of the entire Christian world. Suppose it does disturb the church? When with love, forbearance, gentleness, earnestness and firmness we have insisted on faithfulness to Christ, and the sinful and impenitent rebel, it is well, and the church will be far better off without than with them.

True it may be said, "Preach the truth and let the light shine in and darkness will go out." Yes, if the eyes are not closed, the ears stopped, the neck stiffened and the heart burdened, possibly so. But the truth never reached all in any age; and Moses and Christ alike went further and denounced in unmeasured terms public sin and sinners, and provided for their punishment, and we need scarcely hope to improve upon their methods.

3. It is the duty of the individual Christian to faithfully discharge his every obligation to the state.

If the responsibilities as above indicated are upon

him, and if neglected, he is left without excuse before the judgment bar of God.

Many good men are so indifferent that they will take no interest whatever in passing political events. They neither attend the primary nor the election, and yet proclaim themselves disgusted with the class of men generally elected to office.

The masses, however, are not much to blame when we know what example is often set them by their spiritual guides.

It is said that some of the best and most able preachers in the country never take a secular paper, and sometimes even boast from the pulpit that they scarcely know who is governor of the state. Well may we tremble for the future of both state and church in the presence of such an alarming state of facts. If we would have good men in office we must see that such are nominated and elected.

Next to indifference in its baneful effects, is the influence of party spirit. We are told at every election that the salvation of the country depends upon the selection of our party ticket; that the country will go to ruin if it is not elected. Year after year has this falsehood been repeated until the mass of each party has come to believe it. At the last presidential election we were told from every stump that the election of Garfield meant death to the party. Slander and abuse and vituperation were poured upon his head from the slanderous lips of politicians. He was elected and a few months of his administration endeared him to every party and every section

of our common country; and when he was stricken down, a nation bowed round one common altar and prayed the Father of love to spare our glorious chief. The whole world looked on, and acknowledged that a Christian statesman was dying.

Again the wily politician, teaching the populace that the primary must be binding as the results upon each participant, gathers the hoodlums of all parties to the primary, has himself nominated, not by his party, but by the ignorant, corrupt and vicious of all parties, and then cracks his party whip and marches Christian men to the polls to vote for one wholly unworthy the confidence and respect of the community. To such an extent has this abuse been carried, that, as a rule, the most blasphemous and licentious man is the successful candidate. The remedy is in the independent voter. Let every Christian citizen go to the primary and vote for the best man, and if the wicked succeed in nominating a bad man, let him go to the polls and cast his vote against him. Let party politics go to the winds and vote for sober and honest men for office. Carry your religion into your politics. It needs it badly, and would be much improved by its presence.

In conclusion, I would say I am most keenly conscious of the imperfections of this paper, but if you will remember the onerous duties which have been pressed upon me during the year that is past, in the care for my congregation, preparation for the pulpit, the management of the interests of the Prohibition Alliance in the state, and the conduct of an immense

correspondence, you will be prepared to judge of its merits in comparison at best.

THE FOURTH GOSPEL.

BY G. W. LONGAN.

It is not mere idle curiosity which inspires in us the wish to know more than Scripture has communicated touching the apostolical activity of the men chosen by our Lord to be his witnesses in Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. Apart from most uncertain tradition, who knows aught accomplished by any one of them save impulsive Peter and the younger of the two ambitious sons of Zebedee? Of James, the brother of John, we know simply that his career of usefulness was cut short by early martyrdom. Of his more distinguished brother we know indeed something more, but, alas, how little, compared with our irrepressible desires! Doubtless we should do well to rest content with what Providence has bestowed. The gospel was not intended to make heroes, in the world's sense of the term, or to exalt any mere man above his fellows. A limit must have been placed somewhere, and let us believe that divine wisdom has placed it for the best. That the workmen passed away unknown was a small matter, if the work survived. The survival of the work proves the efficiency of the workmen. But, in no event could Jesus have been mistaken in the men to whom he intrusted the grandest achievement of all the ages. They were earthen vessels, to be

sure, but let us not doubt that they were vessels wisely chosen. And yet we cannot escape the wish to know more regarding the details of their work. I confess especially to the desire to know more concerning John. I find it comparatively easy to let the others pass without further questioning. But "he who leaned on Jesus' breast," the "disciple whom Jesus loved," why is sacred narrative so strangely reticent concerning him? There were great crises through which we know that the church passed in his day, concerning which our information is scanty at best, and our conclusions often conjectural. What part did he enact in those stirring, eventful years? Is there even the shadow of truth in the belief which criticism avows, that he sympathized with the intense particularism of a large element in the mother church? It is impossible not to desire clear information in respect of these matters. We are not left in darkness as to Peter's course. Nor is there much uncertainty concerning James, the Lord's brother. Of both these, Luke and Paul give certain luminous glimpses which, with some pains, we can shape into pictures, of whose general fidelity to the originals there can be little doubt. It is far otherwise with John. We know that he was closely associated with Peter in the earliest days at Jerusalem, where he preached Christ boldly, and suffered persecution with heroic fortitude. Later along, Paul tells us he was accounted a "pillar" of the church in the same city. But of his personal leanings and closer affiliations, in times of divided counsels, no

special mention is made. Was he absolutely silent, when the burning question of the rights of the Gentiles was undergoing discussion in the so-called Council of Jerusalem? Who can help wishing to know? Certainly no one who has followed the pathway of modern criticism along these lines. We do know about Peter and James (the Lord's brother), for Luke reports their speeches in the council with much care. If John said anything, he does not mention it. It is difficult not to desire more explicit information at this point. We know, indeed, that along with Peter and James, he gave "the right hand of fellowship to Paul and Barnabas, that they should go to the heathen." For this let us be thankful; especially as it has a much larger significance than appears on the surface. But a few ringing words that he might have spoken, if faithfully preserved to us, would have settled so many questions! A half dozen sentences, just to the point, would have made the whole Tubingen criticism an impossibility. What an immense amount of bootless labor so few words would have saved. But, if they were uttered we know it not. The record is silent, and the lips that might have spoken are sealed in death.

The problems presented by our canonical gospels are of deepest interest. The synoptists suggest an almost insoluble problem of their own. Unquestionably they drew from a common source. Was that common source oral or written? The best scholarship inclines more and more, it is believed, to the opinion that it was written. But granting a common

written source, can we learn anything definite regarding it? Is the task of separating it from other materials connected with it in our text hopeless, or possible? There are eminent scholars who think the task of separation has already been practically achieved. On such questions I do not claim to have any opinion. Only the most thorough and painstaking scholarship has, in such cases, the right to an opinion. Next comes the tradition of a Hebrew, or Aramaic, document of the Apostle Matthew, older than any of our canonical gospels. The direct testimony of Papias, and all early tradition, agree that Matthew wrote the "Logia" in Hebrew. Is it safe to pronounce this a mistake? May not this Hebrew, or Aramaic, Matthew be the document whose presence at the ground of our synoptics is so unerringly indicated? This question is, perhaps, in the way of final solution.

Next, we have the relation of the Fourth Gospel, ascribed by all ancient tradition to the Apostle John, to the older narratives of the synoptists. As to the question of priority here, there can be no doubt. That our first two gospels were written before the downfall of Jerusalem, may be considered certain. Even so bold a critic as Keim concedes this as to Matthew. The date of Luke is less certain. Still, there is no question that it must be taken as representing, in common with Matthew and Mark, the earliest form of evangelical tradition. But were the synoptical accounts known to the writer of the Fourth Gospel? I answer, unquestionably, they were.

Apart from the tradition—legend, I am tempted to call it—found in the Muratorian Fragment, the allusion (3:24) to the imprisonment of John the Immerser, as to a fact well known, seems to be quite decisive. From what other source could one, writing at the date of this gospel, suppose his readers to have obtained the more exact information here presupposed? Doubtless the latest Gospel was written with a full knowledge of the contents of the earlier narratives. But was it written purposely to supplement the older accounts, as if in imputation to them of deficiencies, which, indeed, the Muratorian legend actually suggests? Such a supposition is not to be seriously entertained. The Gospel has a plan of its own which it pursues systematically throughout. It is, as compared with the synoptics, more distinctly didactic in its aim. It is essentially independent of them. It deals almost exclusively with new materials, and even where it traverses the same ground, culls new incidents; as, for instance, in the passover week in Jerusalem. Though not intentionally a supplement, it is yet one practically. I think the most judicious scholarship accords with this conclusion, though I cannot, at the moment, give references.

It is well known that the synoptists, except in their closing sections, deal exclusively with our Lord's ministry in Galilee. They do not enter Jerusalem till the Master goes up to his last passover. Two of them (Matthew and Luke) give histories of the nativity, but plainly from different sources. Their

accounts are strikingly divergent, not to say discrepant. Dogmatic exegesis has shown itself utterly incompetent to deal with these significant features. The same narrators give us genealogies of Jesus that differ very widely. I do not say that these differences are contradictions. It is barely possible that larger knowledge than is now attainable might clear away all difficulty. Meantime, it is not wise to build too much on remote possibilities. That there are unreconciled discrepancies as to historical detail in our Gospel narratives, cannot be fairly denied. The man who should insist upon harmony, under similar circumstances, in regard to any other writings than our Scriptures, would scarcely escape the contempt of candid interpreters. But I do not desire to magnify this feature. Yet, its existence is not honestly questionable. It is to be noted that, in the synoptics, the human life of Jesus is kept ever prominent, though even here, he is never less than the Son of God, as well as the Messiah of Israel. The teaching of Jesus in these narratives is harmonious throughout, both as to matter and method. The keen-cut aphorism, the illuminating metaphor, the puzzling parable, the searching question and ready response, are marvelously uniform throughout these delineations. Even the longer discourses are essentially the same, though sometimes in a different setting. Surely we have here, in many instances, the Master's very words; or, if he spake in Aramaic, we have still his peculiarities of manner and method most carefully preserved.

I have said that in the synoptical accounts Jesus is never less than the Son of God. "What think you of Christ? Whose Son is he?" They say David's son. "But," says the Master, "how, then, does David, in spirit, call him Lord?" If he be David's son, how can he be at the same time David's Lord? The purport of this questioning is very plain. When, in the parts of Cesarea Philippi, Jesus asked his disciples categorically, "Who say ye that I am?" Peter answered, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God." So it is throughout the synoptical account. His human life, as I have said, is ever prominent, but his Messianic dignity as Son of God is never compromised. But what was the synoptical meaning of the expression, "Son of God?" Is there a word to indicate how they understood it? I ask special attention to this text: "The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee; *wherefore*, also that which is to be born shall be called Holy, the Son of God." Luke 1:45. I suspect we have here the synoptical explanation of the words, "Son of God." You see I am looking after facts, and cannot pause to take care of obsolescent theories of biblical inspiration. This seems to be what the men who have preserved to us the salient features of Christ's Galilean ministry, understood to be the explanation of the Divine Sonship. I do not dogmatize on this question, but can scarcely doubt that Jesus was the Son of God to the earliest narrators, and to their sources, because of his supernatural conception. His life was

more than an ordinary human life because he had been divinely begotten. It is certain that, if we knew only the synoptics, we should, as a question of exegesis, be shut up to the same conclusion to-day. The three synoptists represent the same point of view. They give us a single picture. To them, the man Jesus was by divine call and consecration the Messiah of Israel. For this work he had been supernaturally endowed by the descent upon him of the Holy Spirit at his baptism. As became his high office, he was the Son of God in a most unique sense by the miracle of his origin. If they explained, as they probably did, his absolute sinlessness of life by a reference to the same miracle, it should not be thought strange. Nothing indeed would have been more natural. As regards the teaching of Jesus, the representation of the synoptists is quite as uniform as is their exhibition of his personality. His methods are clearly and sharply drawn so that there is little danger of mistaking the picture they place before us for that of any other. I have dwelt upon these things because the problem of the Fourth Gospel can only be comprehended and solved from the standpoint thus gained. Its relation to the synoptical narratives constitutes indeed a large part of the problem. At the risk of being considered tedious, I have, therefore, given this rather extended preparation, hoping that the close connection of all that has been said, with our chief lines of inquiry, would be accepted as a sufficient apology for the time consumed.

Passing from the synoptics into the Fourth Gos-

pel, the critical student finds himself in a new world. The key-note of the entire Gospel is struck in the opening sentences: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that hath been made." Hitherto we have heard nothing like this. It is not simply that the phraseology is new, the teaching itself is new. If what is so clearly stated here is contained in the older Gospels, it is contained only by implication. It may be brought out by logical deduction, let us grant, but clearly it was not in the minds of those who gave shape to the synoptic statement. With the epistles of Paul and the Fourth Gospel before us we can read into their words meanings which they did not themselves perceive. This is not especially strange. Many a man's knowledge has furnished the premises for conclusions that he did not at all suspect. But as we advance, we shall soon see that our Evangelist has turned quite away from the well-worn paths of the Galilean tradition in quest of other and more congenial fields. He leads us at once into new lines of travel, introduces us to new and interesting persons, and sketches interviews and incidents of which we have hitherto heard nothing. In common with the older narrators, he records miracles, but only a few, and these, for the most part, not mentioned elsewhere. To him, the miracles of our Lord have obviously a symbolical import, and so he designates them, with evident prefer-

ence, as "signs;" a word not in good, canonical standing with the synoptists. It is remarkable that among the miracles of this Gospel, there is not a single case of exorcism. One cannot avoid wishing to know why, but it would be vain to speculate. There may, perhaps, be plausible conjecture, but no real knowledge. In the beginning of our Gospel we are told that "the Word became flesh and dwelt with men." A few sentences further on this Word incarnate is called Jesus Christ. Of the Word, after this, we hear nothing more. It is to be noted here that the writer constantly regards Jesus as a man; he, indeed, uses freely the synoptical expression, "Son of man;" but it is easily apparent throughout, that, to him, Jesus is infinitely more than man. He follows the human footsteps of the Great Teacher, but his delineation is that of the Word that is God, rather than that of the man Jesus. He that came forth from God, who was about to return to God, he in whom the Father dwells, who is one with the Father, the Word, the only begotten Son,—he it is who is ever present to the writer's consciousness. Of this peerless One he does not lose sight for a moment. His representation of the teaching of Jesus, the tone and tenor of purely narrative sections, every incident, every word, takes shape in harmony with the fundamental conception already announced in the prologue. Dr. Edwin A. Abbott, of England, in his very remarkable article, "Gospels," in the Encyclopedia Brittanica, says: "The Word is never unable (as in Mark 6:6) to work miracles, never

liable to 'marvel,' never in 'agony,' never, except at the grave of Lazarus, 'sorrowful and very heavy;' the words *eleos* (mercy), *eleein* (to have mercy), *splanknizomai* (to have compassion), occur repeatedly in the synoptics, never in the Fourth Gospel; the Word 'knows what is in man,' sees Nathanael 'under the fig-tree,' discerns from the first that one of the twelve whom he had chosen was a 'devil;' when he asks advice of his followers, it is merely 'to prove them, for he himself knew what he would do;' there is not in the drama of the Fourth Gospel (as in Mark) any development of thought or plan as to the chief actor. . . . . The whole of the future, his destined 'lifting up,' his death, his rising in three days, all lie mapped out before the Savior, so that he walks in a known country, and in light, while all around, friends and foes alike, are stumbling or groping in the dark."

The general truthfulness of this statement must be apparent, I think, to every candid student. It is not without a purpose that our Gospel omits all notice of the Lord's birth and infancy; that no mention is made (as in Luke) of his growing in "wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men;" that there is no apparent unwillingness to assume the character and title of the Christ, which we constantly notice in the synoptists. The writer has ever before him the pre-existence, the Word incarnate, the only begotten Son, a conception which shuts out, at least for the moment, all thought of development as we know it in ordinary human life. In the synoptists we see, or

think we see, the dawning consciousness of the Messianic mission; later we note that it has passed into the fullness of assured conviction; while, anon, we witness the actual entrance upon the Messianic career. Between the infant Savior in Mary's arms, and the Savior of the temptation, of the sermon on the Mount, of Cesarea Philippi, of the last passover, as traced by the synoptists, we discover, or seem to discover, a consciousness gradually enlarging with added experiences; and in one instance we have open confession of limitation as to knowledge. In the Fourth Gospel all such phenomena are conspicuously absent. At the very threshold, Jesus is recognized by Nathanael as the "Son of God, the King of Israel." To this prompt avowal of his faith, Jesus replies: "Because I said unto thee, I saw thee underneath the fig-tree, believest thou? Thou shalt see greater things than these. Ye shall see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man." John 1 : 51. How far away all this is from the cautious and conservative announcement of the synoptical teaching of Jesus, the careful student does not need to be told. The synoptical ministry of Christ, as I have said, does not begin till after the imprisonment of John the Baptist, and even then is limited to Galilee, save in the account of the visit to Jerusalem at its close. But the ministry of the Fourth Gospel opens in Jerusalem, the metropolis of the ancient faith and worship, and on the occasion of the annual feast of the passover, when the city was crowded with pilgrims from

all parts of Judea and Galilee, and also from the chief colonies of the "*diaspora*" in foreign lands. It was during this visit that our Lord drove from the temple the money-changers, and those that sold oxen, sheep and doves, with the materials of their desecrating traffic. A similar scene, it will be remembered, is placed by the synoptists among the events of the last visit to Jerusalem. Must we hold that there were two cleansings of the temple, identical in all material points, or is the one cleansing chronologically out of place in the earlier, or later, account? Will any one answer? Perhaps though I should beg pardon of the mechanical harmonists for venturing even to suggest such an alternative. For without controversy, great is Tradition, and the preacher who would fare smoothly in this present world must pay due respect to so widely-worshiped a divinity. But to proceed: Jesus wrought many signs in Jerusalem during this visit, and "many believed on him," though, on his part, "he did not trust himself to them." Why, we are not told; only that "he knew what was in man." On this occasion, too, occurred the noteworthy interview with Nicodemus, which has figured so largely in theological systems since, and towards the close of which our Lord openly declares the fact of his "descent out of heaven." "If I have told you earthly things and you believe not, how shall you believe if I tell you heavenly things? And no man hath ascended into heaven, but he that descended out of heaven, even the Son of man who is in heaven." After this he withdrew with his

disciples into Judea, where he tarried and baptized (through his disciples), while John, not yet cast into prison, was baptizing at Ænon, not many miles away. Turning his face, at length, towards Galilee, our Evangelist tells us, "he must needs go through Samaria." On this journey occurred the memorable interview with the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well, and the conversion—shall we call it?—of a number of Samaritans of the ancient city of Sychar, situated, apparently, only a little off the way. Very soon he is again in Galilee, the scene of the synoptic ministry, but the line of synoptic narrative is not touched, unless in the healing of the nobleman's son, which our Gospel contains, probably, in common with Matthew and Luke, though Canon Westcott (see Bib. Com. *in loco*) thinks otherwise. In any event, it is clear that the entire section which precedes the account of the arrival in Galilee, antedates the commencement of our Lord's Galilean ministry as reported by the synoptists. It is especially interesting to notice how sharply the account of our Evangelist, in the section now before us, contrasts, in several particulars, with that of the older narrators.

(1) *Our Lord's absolute knowledge of men.* He needed no outward suggestion to acquaint him with what was passing within. He saw straight into the soul's laboratory, as we see into a transparency. To him, the thoughts of the mind, the desires of the heart, appeared in open vision. Nathanael and the woman of Samaria are only typical cases. It was

always the same. He read unspoken thoughts, he took in the whole wide sweep of outward actualities, of which, in the ordinary human way, he could have known nothing. To the writer of this gospel, a disappointment, like that of the failure to find figs on the fig-tree (Mark 11 : 12-13), must have seemed an utter impossibility.

(2) *His unhesitating acceptance of the Messianic office, and open avowal of a pre-earthly life in the immediate presence of the Father.* On this point, according to our Gospel, there was no doubt left from the beginning. Our Evangelist seems quite incapable of conceiving of him in any other character than that of the Word incarnate. This is the picture which is ever present to his mind's eye, and no expression at any time escapes him, which does not harmonize with it.

(3) *The peculiar way in which the Baptist's "witness" to the Lord is made to conform to the Evangelist's own dominant conception.* From the beginning, the Baptist sees in Jesus the "Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." And if we are to follow Dean Alford, from whom I never dissent except for the best of reasons, in ascribing the closing verses of the third chapter (vv. 31, 36) to the Baptist instead of the Evangelist himself, he seems to have apprehended, at once, not only the truth concerning the Lord's person, which is the most distinguishing peculiarity of our Gospel, but also to have strongly grasped the New Testament office of faith in the economy of salvation. But it is

impossible to follow the Dean here, unless one means to give up the apostolical authorship of our Gospel. These words must be the words of the Evangelist, not of the Baptist. It is difficult enough to reconcile John's first "witness"—"This is the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world"—with the synoptical account. It is not well to assume impossible tasks gratuitously.

(4) *The hearty welcome of the Samaritans of Sychar, and their ready reception of him, in spite of immemorial race hatred, as "the Savior of the world."* Standing over against the account of Samaritan inhospitality in Luke 19:51, 56, this successful ministry presents a very striking picture. And yet it was John, who, with his brother, said, "Lord, shall we bid fire to come down from heaven and consume them?" If all ancient tradition is right in ascribing this Gospel to John, he must have chosen to perpetuate the far more agreeable incident in his experiences, with his Divine Master, among the ancient enemies of his people. Neither was it unnatural that he should do so. Slowly, no doubt, but effectually, an ever-enlarging knowledge of our Lord's saving work had replaced the narrow Jewish ideas of his early life, until the memory of this hasty impulse had become positively unpleasant to him.

It would be impossible to deal exhaustively with the peculiarities of our Gospel within the proper limits of a single address. Nor is it absolutely necessary to our present purpose. It is sufficient to say that we are led by the writer, throughout, along un-

familiar paths. The line of synoptic narration is seldom touched. Even when we come to the events of the passion week in Jerusalem, we find little in common with them. It is noteworthy that our Evangelist makes no mention of the institution of the Lord's Supper, nor of the observance by Christ, with his disciples, of the Jewish passover, concerning which the synoptists furnish us such full details. And yet he knows of another supper—shall I call it another—difficult, at least, to be identified with the supper of the synoptists, and strangely enough, if it be indeed another supper, he connects with it certain incidents, which the earlier narrators say occurred at the Paschal Supper, the observance of which they all record as among the things most certainly believed. This remarkable divergence of our Gospel—not to speak of it as a positive discrepancy—from the corresponding synoptical account, and also his chronology of the passion, is of the most absorbing interest. If one is to hold intelligently the doctrine of Gospel inspiration in minute historical detail, there is some honest critical work yet to be done here, which, to say the least, cannot be done too quickly. For myself, believing as I do, that this work will never be done, I am glad to be able to say, that my faith is quite independent of any mere mechanical harmony, and not in the least affected by past failures in that direction.

A remarkable feature of our Gospel is its omission of the eschatological discourses of our Lord, reported so fully, yet variously, by the synoptists, and the

substitution, so to speak, of the tender and touching esoteric conversations and discourses at the supper table, and along the way to the scene of his betrayal. What an irreparable loss to Christian thought and experience we should have suffered, if the synoptical account had not been supplemented at this point by the graphic delineations of the latest Evangelist! The allegory of the vine and the branches, the discourse on the promise of the Spirit, the wonderful prayer of intercession—that prayer whose mighty reverberations still echo onward through the centuries, and the tender legacy of a peace, not like that which the world gives,—all these things are stated in the writer's own peculiar, engaging way; and then he passes rapidly to the absorbing events in which this wondrous, divine drama reaches its concluding scene. This section of our Gospel is one of great pathos and power. Millions have followed its masterly delineations with rapt interest, finding without stint the food which satisfies the deepest hungerings of the human soul. Would it not be strange, indeed, if these millions of intelligent, thoughtful men and women had been feasting on the "flimsy stuff which dreams are made of," and finding constant spiritual renewal from such unsubstantial dietary! Let him believe it who can. Such faith is not for me. And, yet, I do not forget that all religions obtain whatever hold they have upon the human heart through the promise which they give, or seem to give, of satisfying these universal hungerings of humanity. If Christ does not redeem this promise as none other ever did, or

can do, why, then, let his memory perish with the rest! This is, indeed, the crucial test, and we can afford to wait calmly the world's final decision. When this decision shall be reached, it will rest, let us not doubt, upon the basis of that which best satisfies the heart's deepest yearnings, while meeting, at the same time, every rightful claim of the understanding; so making faith eternally consistent with the highest reason and culture of an ever-advancing humanity. What that final decision shall be, we who have tasted of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, cannot cherish a doubt. In view of all the past conflicts and experiences of our race, it is safe to say that only one decision is possible.

In speaking of the doctrine of Christ's pre-existence as peculiar, among the Evangelists, to the Fourth Gospel, I took occasion to mention the fact that it is found also in the epistles of Paul. This has, indeed, been sometimes disputed by ingenious scholars, but without any considerable following, that I am aware of, even among the foes—so to speak—of our religion. Certainly no candid inquirer should find any difficulty on this point. It may perhaps be doubted whether it is contained, as many of us have been accustomed to think, in the opening sentence of the epistle to the Romans. The language of the apostle —"Concerning his Son, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, who was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection of the dead"— may admit of a different interpretation. Dr. Bernhard

Weiss, of Berlin, whom I shall quote frequently, a little further along, whose orthodoxy, no less than his profound scholarship, is freely attested by the highest authorities in Europe and America, does not seem to be quite clear concerning this particular passage. (See Bib. Theol., N. T., Vol. 1, Sec. 77.) Still the antithetical contrast between "seed of David according to the flesh," and "Son of God according to the Spirit of holiness," seems to point clearly in that direction. What can the "Spirit of holiness," here contrasted with the human corporeity derived from David, mean, if not antecedent being? But, though this may seem clear enough, we have no need to rest anything upon it. Elsewhere Paul dissipates all doubt as to his position. In Colossians 1:15, Christ is said to be "the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation." The pre-existence, though perhaps not the eternal pre-existence, if any one shall so insist, is here placed beyond doubt. In 1 Cor. 15:45, 47, we read: "The first man, Adam, became a living soul. The last Adam became a life-giving Spirit. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is of, or from, heaven." The contrast here expressed by the words "of the earth" and "of heaven," is clearly that of the human and the divine. In Gal. 4:4, the Son is said to be sent forth by the Father in order that he may secure sonship for others; "that we might," says the apostle, "receive the adoption of sons." The language, "God sent forth his Son," implies the pre-existence of the Son beyond doubt, though it

may not involve the idea of pre-existent, or eternal sonship, in the sense of the creeds. "Behold I send my messenger before thy face," does not, perhaps, mean that the messenger was, *de facto*, a messenger before he was sent, but certainly he must have existed before he could be sent. So in regard to our passage in Galatians, the Sonship of Christ may possibly have been connected with the act of sending, but his existence in some antecedent form, whether as Son or Word, is necessarily implied. In 2 Cor. 8 : 9, Paul says : "You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that you through his poverty might become rich." Beyond doubt, the riches and poverty of Christ here can only be referred to the contrasted pre-existent and earthly states. Where was he rich before he became poor, if not in heaven. Nothing can be plainer than this. In Paul, there is also the conception of a mediatorship of Christ in God's creating activity, just as we have in the Gospel his mediatorship in the economy of grace. "There is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we unto him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and we through him." The mediatorship of Jesus Christ in creation is so plainly taught here that it is impossible to call the fact in question. Hitherto, excepting the passage quoted from Colossians, I have sought the Pauline Christology only in the four great epistles, the authorship of which is undisputed. In the Philippians, "the genuineness of which," says Archdeacon

Farrar, "is beyond the shadow or suspicion of a doubt"—though this has not been universally admitted by critics—we have the following absolutely conclusive words: "Have this mind in you which was also in Christ Jesus; who existing in the form of God, counted not the being on equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men."

Here our Lord's pre-existence, divinity, incarnation, are all unmistakably taught. These passages, taken together, do most certainly connect Paul's Christology essentially with that of the Fourth Gospel. And though there is a difference as to mode of conception, though the final conclusion has evidently been reached through different mental processes, starting from an entirely different ground of thought, yet there can be no question as to the substantial identity throughout. And this is the more important, since the Pauline epistles undoubtedly represent, as we shall soon see more fully, an earlier stage of doctrinal development than that of our Gospel. It cannot be questioned that Paul's epistles reflect the essential features of his oral proclamation, and in this way the Pauline Christology which, as we have seen, is essentially that of the Fourth Gospel, is carried back, in its historical setting, to the date of Paul's early missionary activity among the Gentiles. The bearing of this significant fact upon our present lines of inquiry is too apparent to need special elaboration. It thus becomes clear that, although the Fourth Evan-

gelist is alone among the writers of our canonical Gospels in declaring the facts of our Lord's pre-existence and incarnation, he was not the first to announce it, in the actual order of historical development. This honor, according to the records, belongs to the apostle to the Gentiles, who, in the written statement, antedated him many years. However peculiar, therefore, this Gospel undoubtedly is in the form of its representation, it is not peculiar in its fundamental position. As regards the essential substance of his Evangelical testimony, the writer had been anticipated by Paul. And this unquestionable fact disposes effectually of what might, otherwise, be regarded as a very grave objection to the apostolic authorship of the Gospel. If the substance of the Fourth Evangelist's conception of our Lord is found in Paul, there can be no need to carry forward to the middle of the second century the date of our Gospel in order to account for minor differences as to the mode of representation. Even if it shall be thought that the influence of Philo, the Alexandrian, is apparent in its terminology, there is yet no reason for insisting on so late a date. The epistle to the Hebrews, doubtless, discloses an acquaintance with Philonian culture, and, yet, the epistle to the Hebrews must have been written before the end of the first century. It is not safe to argue from a questionable proposition (such as the influence of Philo on our Evangelist) to a conclusion yet more questionable. Nevertheless, this has been done, whenever apparent traces of Phi-

lonian thought or phrase have been urged as grounds for a late date.

This brings us fairly to the consideration of that which is certainly peculiar among the writers of the New Testament to the author of the Fourth Gospel, viz: his mode of conceiving, and form of stating, the facts of our Lord's pre-existence and incarnation. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." This is absolutely peculiar. There is nothing like it in any other New Testament writer. Again: only the writer of this Gospel speaks of Jesus as "The only-begotten Son of God." (Of course I assume here that the writer of the Gospel is also the writer of the epistle known as First Epistle of John). Paul, indeed, speaks of him as the "First born of all creation," but evidently with another thought in his mind. The passage is not parallel with those of our Gospel. The "Word" and the "Only-begotten Son" are, then, designations strictly peculiar to our Evangelist, whoever he may have been. What now is the significance of this fact? This is a question of great importance, and it will become us to advance with due caution. (1). Is there any reason to suppose that this doctrine of the Logos (so-called) was borrowed from Philo, the founder of the Jewish Alexandrian School? Certainly, none. So far as our Lord's preexistence is concerned, there is not the shadow of necessity for such a supposition. We have found this idea already in the writings of Paul, and certainly, I may say, without any reasonable suspicion of

Alexandrian influence either as to his conception or his terminology. The Pauline form of the idea may be fairly assumed to represent its most advanced development prior to the date of our Gospel. That there is a certain resemblance between Philo's doctrine of the Word, and the Christian belief in our Lord's pre-existence, cannot be denied. But the latter was evidently originated in Paul's case quite independently of Alexandrian suggestion. Why not, also, in that of the writer of the Fourth Gospel? Why not regard our Evangelist as dependent—if dependence must be assumed—upon Paul, the apostle, rather than the Jewish Platonist? But there is no reason to assume dependence on any one. The Christology of Paul, and the Fourth Evangelist, lies imbedded in the very conception of redemption set forth in the oral gospel, from Pentecost onward, and must inevitably have taken definite shape in the thought of the church, as the development of Christian truth under the guidance of the Holy Spirit constantly advanced. It is safe, therefore, to say that the writer of our Gospel had no need to draw on Philo for the essential substance of his statement. (2). But did our Evangelist borrow from the founder of the Alexandrian School the leading terms in which he formulates his doctrine? If he did not obtain from this source his thought, did he not the beautiful costume in which he sends it forth to the world? This is a very different question, and of much less importance. The use of Philo's technical term, "Logos," is plainly the chief ground for holding that the writer of our Gospel was dependent

upon him for his doctrine. But this is manifestly illogical. If we assume our Evangelist to have had acquaintance with Philo's speculations, what was there to hinder him discerning, as he must have done, a plain resemblance between the Alexandrian idea and the fundamental Christian conception, from appropriating Philo's term to express his own independent faith? Certainly there was nothing. In this view there is, at most, only the appropriation of a term; and to that no reasonable objection is, I think, possible. Besides, the Alexandrian term was most happily adapted to express the Christian idea, an idea which was in the church, as we have seen, quite independently of Alexandria. So far then as the Philonian doctrine was consistent with the Christian faith, it derogates nothing from the independence or inspiration of the writer of our Gospel to admit that he may have adopted Alexandrian terminology. There is a reason why he might have done this without impropriety. Notwithstanding a resemblance between the Philonian and Christian ideas, there is, at the same time, a remarkable and irreconcilable difference. The incarnation of the Logos is confessedly abhorrent to Philo's whole system. And why may not the writer of our Gospel have adopted Philo's term, the aptness of which, for his own purpose, he could not fail to perceive, in order that he might incidentally, but more effectually on that very account, enter a protest against so much of the Philonian doctrine as was, from the Christian point of view, essentially and thoroughly untenable. This, it seems to

me, would have been the most natural thing in the world. Accordingly, we see that our Evangelist has no sooner formulated his doctrine of the Logos, which might seem to identify his conception with that of the Alexandrian school, than he hastens to disclose the existence of a most striking, and ever irreconcilable, difference between them. So he says: "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us." This one utterance—"The Word became flesh"—settles forever the question as to any real identity between the Logos of the Fourth Gospel and that of Philo. Nevertheless, Dr. Abbott, in the very able and scholarly article heretofore quoted, expresses a conviction that the influence of Philo upon our Evangelist may be seen in several particulars. Of these, the most important, and most clearly marked, is, of course, this doctrine of the Logos. I quote from Dr. Abbott's article the following careful statement:

"That there are elements of the Alexandrian theory which are inconsistent with the Christian theory, affords no proof at all that the Christian theory was independent of the Alexandrian. It was inevitable that when the Christians borrowed, they would adopt what was consistent, and discard what was inconsistent with their own belief in the incarnation of Christ. Before Paul wrote the epistle to the Colossians, and, *a fortiori*, before the composition of the Fourth Gospel, that instinct which compels men to set the First Cause of all at a distance from matter, had impelled Alexandrian Judaism to adopt the belief that the

Supreme God did not himself create the world, or manifest himself to mankind, but indirectly and mediately through some medium or mediator. The simplest and subtlest metaphor to express this mediateness was Word—more especially in the Greek language where Word (Logos) might mean reason as well as speech, the word in the thought as well as in the sound. Man manifests himself through deeds as well as words; but for the Supreme (with whom to speak is to do) the only necessary manifestation was the Word, the Logos. Dr. Lightfoot has shown (Col. 1 : 16) that Philo sometimes regards the Logos as a mere passive instrument, so that he allows himself to use the simple instrumental dative to describe the relation of the world to the Creator—which way of speaking is not found in the New Testament; and elsewhere Philo expressly likens the world to a house, and the Logos to the *organon*, or tool. Philo also describes the Logos as 'the archetypal model, the idea of ideas.' "

Dr. Abbott frankly confesses that "these passages indicate a great gulf between the Christian and Alexandrian Logos." But he tells us there are "many other passages, which Christians could adopt unchanged, applying them to the incarnate Christ." He gives several examples, from which I select the following: "*Question:* Why is it he speaks as of some other God, saying, 'He made man after the image of God,' and not that he made him after his own image? *Solution:* Very appropriately and without any falsehood was this oracular sentence

uttered by God; for no mortal thing could have been formed on the image of the Supreme Father of the universe, but only after the pattern of the second Deity who is the Word of the Supreme Being. Even where Philo speaks of the Word as the instrument of creation, he speaks of it, or him, as 'the image of God.' 'The image of God is the Word by whom all the world was framed.' Further, the Word is frequently called by Philo, the 'First begotten Son' and 'Eldest Son.' Many of the very expressions which are sometimes used to show that the Logos of the Alexandrians was impersonal, are found applied to God in the Old Testament or to Christ in the New." Of these the learned Doctor gives examples, but I need not take time to repeat them here.

It must be said that candor requires that, within proper limits, the weight of this representation should be freely admitted. Canon Westcott and Dr. Bernhard Weiss still hold that our Evangelist drew his entire Logos doctrine directly from the Old Testament. Of this I have grave doubts. Notwithstanding the general candor of both these great scholars, I cannot help feeling that, in this particular, they are carried away with their zeal to make out a case. In any event, it is not quite clear why we should cling to this position so tenaciously. I confess I do not see what is to be gained by it even from the standpoint of a partisan. If no biblical writer had ever drawn from unbiblical sources, it might be worth while, perhaps, to make a stand here. As it is, however, I do not think there is wisdom in doing

so. It seems reasonably clear that the writer of the Fourth Gospel was acquainted with the Alexandrian theory. What was there to hinder? This Gospel, in any event, must have been written towards the close—let us say—of the first century of our era. Philo was born, as nearly as can be determined, about B. C. 20, and had probably been dead some years before our Evangelist undertook his great work. He was the founder of an active and influential school of thinkers. It was inevitable that the writer of our Gospel, whoever he may have been, should come in contact with representatives of this school. The similarity of certain features of the Alexandrian teaching to the Christian faith touching Christ's pre-existence and mediatorial office in creation must have been instantly apparent. Indeed it could not escape recognition. In this state of case, what could have been more natural, let me say again, than that our Evangelist should deliberately choose to adapt his statement of an entirely independent faith to the technical forms of an influential body of contemporary thinkers, taking good care, at the same time, to guard against the blending of foreign and incongruous elements with his peculiar representation of Christian belief? To me, nothing seems more simply natural. This, therefore, is the explanation which I should offer, at least with present lights, touching the relation of the Fourth Gospel to Alexandrian Philonism. It will be clearly seen that the facts, as here indicated, do not require the carrying forward the date of our Gospel into the second

century. Whatever knowledge of Philonism is fairly implied was accessible in the closing decades of the first century. This explanation has the merit of meeting any argument as to date and authorship drawn from supposed traces of Alexandrian influence in other sections of this Gospel. The explanation of one instance is the explanation of all. Knowledge of contemporary culture may easily enough give a peculiar turn to sentences and phrases, when anything in the nature of doctrinal dependence is not to be thought of. And so I conclude that the incomparable prologue of the Fourth Gospel is not a mere phase of Philonism, but an entirely independent and strictly Christian, conception intentionally, and most aptly, clothed in the technical forms of Philo's school.

There are other interesting features of our Gospel —such as the symbolism of our Lord's miracles already referred to incidentally, and the absence, with a single exception, of the parables, which form so conspicuous a division of the synoptical teaching —that I shall be compelled to pass without special notice. Every one of these peculiarities, no matter how unimportant from a mere superficial point of view, is replete with interest and meaning to the critical student. But time fails me to treat of them here.

Touching the question of authorship, I cannot now say much. Nor is there great need that I should do so. Any good standard work of recent date on New Testament Introduction will give all the facts necessary to a sound conclusion. I may refer to Dr.

Westcott's well-known *Introduction to the Study of the Gospels*, but particularly to his most excellent Introduction to John's Gospel in the Bible (or Speaker's) Commentary. But while I cannot now write elaborately on the authorship of our Gospel, I must say that I see no valid reason for giving up the immemorial tradition which ascribes it to the Apostle John. When a Tubingen critic like Keim is driven to concede a knowledge of it to Justin Martyr, and so to carry back its date to about A. D. 120, and when Renan assigns to it a yet earlier origin, it is easy enough for faith to span the narrow channel which separates us from the closing decades of the first century and the tranquil old age of "the disciple whom Jesus loved." It is much more than vague tradition—and touching questions of fact, even tradition, uncontradicted by voice or circumstance, is no mean witness—upon which our faith in the Johannean authorship of the Fourth Gospel rests. Who else, it is pertinent to inquire, could have written it? None but a thoroughly Christian man could have wished to write it. None but a master in Christian thought could have written it. What traces are revealed in the earliest non-apostolical church literature of a genius capable of accomplishing so marvelous a feat? The more it is studied, the more are we struck with the profound spiritual insight which the writer displays. If it belongs to the second century it stands absolutely alone. There is nothing to compare with it. Read Barnabas, Hermas, Clement, *et id omni genus*, not neglecting the recently recovered

"Teaching of the Twelve Apostles," and answer our question. It is plain that the literature of the second century reveals the presence of no writer comparable with our Evangelist. But we are not left to ask questions. We have positive testimony. Irenæus, near the close of the second century, expressly ascribes it to John. But Irenæus, in his early life, had known Polycarp at Ephesus, and Polycarp was a disciple of John. This short chain of three massive links is not to be broken: Irenæus, Polycarp, John. The uncontradicted belief of the whole ancient church, resting on such a basis of personal testimony, must not be set aside except for the most conclusive reasons. Such reasons do not exist. A criticism of the difference between the Greek of the Apocalypse and that of the Gospel, however worthy of fair consideration, is not of sufficient weight for the purpose. Twenty or thirty years of direct contact with Greek culture at Ephesus must have wrought a great change in the apostle's power of expression in that polished tongue. Neither is the great age of the apostle, at the time the Gospel must have been written, an insuperable difficulty. I grant it is not without weight, but that is all. Dr. Abbott, so freely quoted already, admits that it is not impossible, though he thinks improbable, that John should have written it, notwithstanding his age. I venture to think there are some things—for instance, the unconscious gliding away from words or statements of others (as John the Baptist, or Christ) into statements or explanations of his own—a fact which we certainly see in the early

chapters, which seem to indicate a momentary lapse of memory, after the manner of advanced age. Is it not clearly so? But take this hint for what it is worth. I charge nothing for it. To me, at least, it does not seem unworthy of consideration. But apart from any direct argument, which I do not here enter upon at length, I may say that when a Unitarian scholar of world-wide fame, like the late Dr. Ezra Abbott, of Harvard—not the Dr. Abbott, of England, heretofore quoted—who being a Unitarian, and presumably interested in reducing to the *minimum* the proofs of our Lord's divinity, does not hesitate to avow his conviction of the Johannean authorship of this Gospel, it is not to be supposed that any one not so interested should be disinclined to accept his verdict. At all events, when a Unitarian theologian of the highest eminence for critical scholarship decides in favor of the genuineness of our Gospel, after having patiently heard, and candidly weighed, all that hostile criticism can say to the contrary, there can, at least, be no doubt as to the weight of the evidences which have impelled him to this decision. And, when referring to a well-known work, he says: "Individuals differ widely in their power of resisting evidence opposed to their prejudices, and the author of 'Supernatural Religion' has few equals in this capacity," we must not only accept his statement, but cordially indorse the application. But I shall not further pursue the question of authorship on this occasion. I have not space for larger treatment, even if I inclined to undertake it. It is admitted

that the external proofs are fairly adequate. The difficulties, so far as any exist, are drawn from the Gospel itself. And to these we have devoted our chief attention. But I was unwilling to let this opportunity pass without putting myself again to record on this question. It is my faith that our Gospel, as to its essential contents certainly, as to its form presumably, is the Gospel of the disciple whom the Master so tenderly loved. Why should I doubt it? Even Baur perceived that the Johannean theology is the highest type of New Testament doctrine; that it "pre-supposes all the other stages, includes them all in itself, and concludes them." Especially is this true, let me say, of the Johannean Christology. It is the very kernel, doctrinally, of redemption, and without it the whole conception of Christ's mediatorial work must have remained forever incomplete.

Passing some minor features in our Gospel, upon which criticism has sought to ground arguments against the received view of its authorship, I come, in conclusion, to speak of its peculiar representation of our Lord's teaching. Here it is indispensable to note the fact that Christian doctrine, even in the minds of inspired men, was a growth. It matters not that the conditions were extraordinary; that there was a guiding Providence without, and supernatural illumination within. All this is freely admitted; nay, distinctly affirmed. It was still a growth; that is, a development under finite conditions on the human side. This process of growth can best be understood by noting distinctly, at the outset, its three

principal stages, viz: the Judeo-Christian, the Pauline, the Johannean. These stages mark a constantly ascending scale, which it will be fatal to any rational comprehension of the New Testament, not to perceive. Upon this I believe we cannot insist too strongly. Some years ago, I wrote a paper, afterwards published in the first number of the *Christian Quarterly Review*, in which the attempt was made to trace out some of the chief lines of this progress. And though the work clearly enough was wanting in completeness, time and further study have fully confirmed me in all its most important positions. As to the stages of development, the position of that paper was the same as the one given here. Of its correctness, if you will pardon me for saying it, I do not entertain a doubt. Concerning the Johannine representation of our Lord's teaching, it was there held, as I hold now, that there is no attempt to give the *ipsissima verba* of the Great Teacher; that the style is undeniably the Evangelist's own style; that even the substance is colored, so to say, by his peculiar, personal modes of thinking; and, above all, that he expounds the teaching itself from the advanced point of view which he occupied when writing his Gospel, rather than that of his earliest apprehension of our Lord's meaning. I do not hesitate to say that the general view thus rapidly sketched is absolutely necessary to the satisfactory maintenance of the Johannean authorship of our Gospel. No one who comprehends the real nature of the Fourth Gospel problem can fail, it seems to me, to realize the situa-

tion. The difference between the representation of Christ's teaching in the synoptics, and that given in this Gospel demands, and must have, a rational explanation. This difference is indeed the chief part of the problem seeking solution at our hands. The view just stated is the only explanation, (pardon me for insisting), that satisfies the demands of this problem. I beg leave to submit here some extracts from my former article:

"In accounting for the facts now before us, it is safe to assume for John, in the beginning, a higher spiritual receptivity than can be credited to any other member of the original college of apostles. Perhaps in this respect even the apostle of the Gentiles might hardly compete for the palm against him. There was a reason why Jesus loved John so pre-eminently, and there is little risk in believing that this reason is found in the peculiarity here assumed. If we may take it for granted for the time being, that he wrote the Fourth Gospel and the first epistle which bears his name in our canon, the assumption will become an open fact. For this writer, whoever he may have been, was a man of profound spiritual intuitions and deep spiritual experience. If John was indeed the writer, it is clear that his powers of spiritual perception must have far surpassed those of his apostolic colleagues in the mother church. He entered more profoundly into the spirit of the Gospel discourses and conversations, and attained to a richer and deeper communion with the inner life of the Divine Teacher. . . . . It is easy to see that one so

richly endowed must linger long over the Master's profounder disclosures, while less receptive natures, perceiving little meaning in his words, would soon cease to hold them in remembrance. Let it be supposed, then, that these peculiarities of the Fourth Gospel are simply the fuller development of, it may be, *certain fragmentary utterances of the Master, wrought out under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit through the normal functions and activities of the writer's own soul;* and we shall have a solution of the problem entirely consistent with the tradition of the church that it was written by the Apostle John. . . . . That he often clothes our Lord's thoughts in his own peculiar way, and in the verbal forms of a later period than that of the synoptists, may be admitted without the least damage either to the authority or spiritual value of his work. Of the fact that he has done this, I do not myself entertain a doubt. The thoughts of Jesus in the peculiar clothing of the beloved disciple's mental and moral idiosyncrasies, and verbal forms, are none the less, on that account, the thoughts of God. . . . If it be said, then, that the Fourth Gospel puts into the lips of Jesus certain sayings in regard to his own person, which are not found in the other Gospels, it by no means follows that these sayings are not essentially historical. He may indeed give them to us in the more fully developed forms of a later period, but the *germs*, let us not doubt, were in the very words spoken by the Lord's own lips."

When these sentences were written, four or five

years ago, they were, so far as I knew, without a word of support in the entire literature of the Gospels. But I felt pretty sure that they contained the key to the chief difficulty in the problem of the Fourth Gospel. Though publication might bring on me suspicion of heresy, perhaps also the charge of overweening egotism, I did not think it well to hesitate. I had passed through some ordeals before, and felt none the worse for the experience. I fared quite as well as I had any right to expect, though no one, in printed statement, fully indorsed my position. Still the reviewers were generous in their tone, even when dissenting. For this I give them thanks. The publication in English, in 1882-3, of Dr. Bernhard Weiss' "Biblical Theology of the New Testament," followed immediately, as it was, by his "Life of Christ," has brought to my position new and powerful aid, even if the question shall not be regarded, henceforth, as definitively settled. Weiss' view of the stages of New Testament development is, to all intents, the same as that given in my former paper, and restated here. In treating of the earliest stage, which I have called the Judeo-Christian, he includes in the "sources" the synoptical teaching of Christ, the discourses of Peter, Stephen, and James in the Acts, the first epistle of Peter, and the epistle of James. He excludes from these sources the Johannine teaching of Christ, as belonging to the latest period. This is altogether decisive as to Weiss' view regarding the chief point I have made. Between the earliest phase of Christian development

and the latest, or Johannean phase, he places "Paulinism." That this is the true historical order, there cannot, I think, remain the shadow of a doubt. Of course, it will take time for the great body of Christian thinkers to work up to the final landing-place. But the end is sure. I beg your attention to a few passages from Dr. Weiss' works. Speaking of the earliest tradition of the teaching of Jesus, as above mentioned, he says: "Accordingly the Johannine tradition is altogether excluded from the sources of this representation." (Bib. Theol., Vol. 1, Sec. 10.) Again: "However many authentic sayings of Jesus, both as to import and form, are contained in it, (our Gospel) however many sides of his teaching it lets us see in a new light, or with greater clearness, yet the fact that it is in this, the latest Gospel, that we first hear of these sayings, and have light thrown on these sides, shows that these sayings were awanting, and these sides were in the background, and that they cannot, therefore, have contributed to determine the development of doctrine in the earliest books of the New Testament." (Bib. Theol., Vol. 1, page 50.) Touching the speeches of Jesus as given in our Gospel, he says: "A sharp distinction between the substance of Jesus' speeches proceeding from a true remembrance, and their Johannean conception and setting is neither possible nor necessary. If the Evangelist passed directly at times from communicating the words of Jesus to explanations of his own (3:19-21), or joins utterances of Jesus independently with a whole which has for him the value

of his own reflections, it is clear from this that he was conscious to himself that he had reproduced the speeches of Jesus, not in verbal accuracy, but by a free reproduction according to the laws of memory, etc., etc. That this now really took place is confirmed by the undeniable uniformity between the doctrinal terms and the development of thought in the epistles and the speeches and dialogues in the Gospel. But we therewith lose any certain rule for a complete separation between what was to the Evangelist a given portion of his remembrance of the speeches of Jesus, and what was his own spiritual property. . . . . In point of doctrinal significance there was, therefore, to the Evangelist no distinction between what Jesus had taught directly, and what we now regard as his spiritual possession, because the Spirit only had taught him it. Much which had come directly from Jesus' mouth, and which the Spirit had helped him to reach by a deeper understanding and richer development of the truth contained in his words, must have become mixed up in his remembrance." (Bib. Theol. Vol. 2, pp. 313, 314.) Again: "It is an incontestable fact, that in the proportion in which the Johannine speeches of Christ deviate from the synoptic, they display the type of doctrine and language found in the prologue and the epistle of John. . . . Not unjustly has it been remarked that the personal witness took up a position of greater freedom towards the speeches of his Master than did any one else. He was aware that he had gained from Christ whatever was best in

his new spiritual life; that the ripest fruit which it bore sprang only from *germs* which the Lord had planted, and had not arisen in the manner of natural development, in which it is so easy to confound what is one's own with what belongs to others, or right with wrong. . . . The question does not arise here whether these sayings of Jesus were handed down with literal precision; they express, at all events, the consciousness of the apostle as to the relation which, in accordance with the intention and will of Jesus, existed between what the Spirit had taught them and what they had obtained directly from the lips of Jesus. Having such a consciousness, the apostle would not hesitate to *reproduce freely, and to elucidate the words of Jesus in the way in which the Spirit had taught him to understand their deepest meaning.* Even when he reproduced the speeches and conversations with the greatest freedom, he could have no fear lest he should mistake the meaning of his Master; on the contrary he could explain them to his readers, with all the greater fulness, and make the impression they produced all the deeper, the more he reproduced them in the form in which, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, they had become living in himself." (Weiss' Life of Christ, pp. 121-124.)

You will easily see, brethren, that these extracts lose much of their force on account of the fragmentary way in which I have been compelled to present them to you. To give them in their full context, as you should have them in order to apprehend

fully their remarkable significance, was, of course, impossible. But you will recognize in them (at least those of you who have really grappled with the Johannean problems) the words of one who has an undoubted right to speak on this question. Furthermore, I may say that the perfect coincidence of position, with that contained in the extract from my own paper, cannot by any means escape your notice. You will see that this coincidence extends even to the use of a word—the very word—"germs"—most objected to by my friendly reviewers. I cannot be insensible to the value of the support which my independent position has thus obtained. But the great thing is that truth is brought to light; that God's blessed word is better understood; that the false canons of tradition are yielding to the pressure of independent and reverent criticism, and that more and more, the foundations of negative and unbelieving criticism are being swept away. For such results we should be profoundly thankful. But let no mistake be made. The positions of adverse criticism can only be met with critical weapons. The application of historico-critical methods to the study of the Bible was first perseveringly employed by the rationalistic schools, and this has led many devout Christians to suspect and deprecate these methods. This, I am sure, is a mistaken view. There is no reason to fear. Sound criticism, which is always thoughtful and free, can only be helpful to truth. Under the application of judicious criticism, the New Testament becomes indeed another book. Its pages glow

with a new life. Its sentences unfold new and richer meanings. The barren dogmas of the old scholastic theologies give place to larger and more fruitful generalizations. And so the movement of the church's life is ever forward; out of darkness into light; out of dead, or dying orthodoxies into living and joyous faith; out of chilling theories that dishonor God and paralyze the souls of men, into conceptions of the Supreme Father, and his attitude towards man, his wayward, sinning child, that invest with a holy radiance every work of his gracious, loving hand. And now unto him, who was, in the beginning, with God, who himself was God, the only begotten Son, though whom, and to whom, are all things, unto him be blessing and honor and might, and dominion, forever and ever.

THE SCOFFER IN PROPHECY.

BY O. S. REID.

A mighty conflict is raging. We hear not the onrushing of armies; we note not the advancing tread of victorious hosts nor the attendant retreating footsteps of defeated legions, yet the battle is being fought with vigor. On the one hand the evangels of mercy, armed with wonderful words of life, upholding the banners of hope, pointing earth-weary pilgrims heavenward; on the other the cohorts of evil, armed with enticing words of man's wisdom, panoplied in a false philosophy begotten of their own perverted tastes and groveling aspirations, declaring life the be-all and death the end-all of existence. The one would lead us gently upward, our lives crowned with the Christian virtues, where the Sun of Truth lights up the scenery with its heavenly radiance; the other would lead us down where the black shades of error rest like the storm cloud's darksome wings; where Truth hides her shining face and the fitful glare of misguiding passions alone lights up surrounding dangers. The mind is the arena of this warfare; the conquest of the heart its great object.

In common with many present, I well remember the olden time Sunday-school idea of his satanic majesty, a great, uncouth, black monster, provided with horns, hoofs, tail, a hideous grin upon his coun-

tenance, if that be called countenance which was so "grim and terrible." This monster we recognized as the great leader of the cohorts of evil. In our experience, have we so found him? When the devil undertakes the capture of a human heart he studies his victim's weaknesses, and thus fortified, he makes his advances, *now* in all the witchery of feminine beauty; again, in the glittering tranquility of garnered gold; again, with coronals of earthly might and power, and yet again panoplied in the garb of philosophy. Drawing his robes of erudition about him, proclaiming the wondrous power of human reason, he would wreck his victim, robbing him of hope, of all holy aspirations and lead him out into the blackness of darkness. The last despairing cry welling up from the depths of a soul thus beset, finds voice in the declaration, "death is but an eternal sleep."

To-day the minions of Satan are being marshaled upon this very ground. To-day, the not inaptly styled Problem of Problems, as one of our strong writers is pleased to call it, is offered for our solution. The bold utterances of Holy Writ upon the one hand, the equally bold declarations of human reason upon the other. The grand assumption, voiced by Moses of old, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth," is contrasted with the infinitesimal assumption of so-called science that from a moneron were evolved all things. On one hand, revelation, with its attendant illumination of nature's secrets; on the other, evolution, with its insurmountable difficulties, but blessed be God for a great fact, pre-

cisely this condition of things has been foretold in unmistakable terms. Prophecy, and its fulfillment, has ever been held as one of the chief evidences of the inspiration of the Bible. We cause the panorama of time to pass in review before us, the word of prophecy in hand, and note the harmony. The rise and fall of empire, the utter desolation of once proud centers of commerce, have all been foretold. The voice of prophecy has said, "thus shall it be;" the verdict of history responsively declares, thus it has been or is. These wonderful words of prophecy, beginning with the utterances of Moses respecting the Jews, and ending with the beatific visions that rolled over the soul of John in the Isle of Patmos, and which are yet beyond our comprehension, because unfulfilled, cover all ages, all conditions of humanity. God, in his infinite love and mercy, has forewarned his followers through this agency, to the end that they be forearmed as well.

Peter, the poor, unlettered fisherman, the earnest, faithful disciple, the bold, aggressive apostle was a prophet. Looking down through the sweep of centuries he foresaw the struggles of to-day, and epitomized the philosophy so potent for ill, in a few terse words: "Before the last day, there shall arise scoffers walking after their own lusts and saying, where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." What is the rallying cry of evolutionists? What the great central thought? All things continue as they were from the beginning

of the creation in conformity with laws of nature. Indeed the very language has been foretold. The scoffer, walking in his own lusts, repudiating revelation, accepting his own reason as a guide, asks, Where is the promise of the Savior's coming? Of what avail is it? Do not all things bow before the authority of Nature? Does not your observation lead you to realize that all things continue even as they were from the beginning?

Away with such stuff as, that, clothed with authority, the King of kings and Lord of lords should come in like manner as he ascended on high. Away with ascension and the attendant angel voice of promise. The whole story of the immaculate conception, the bursting of the bars of death, the wondrous miracle by which the Savior maintained his claim to the Messiahship being contrary to the order of nature, is but mythical—the fit outgrowth of an age of ignorance and superstition. These scientists will say to you that in an age long prior to the evolution of the spirit of steam from the waters, whereby machinery is set and kept in motion; in an age long before the printed page fell like autumn leaves to cheer and educate; in an age long before the lightning's flash had been rendered subservient to the will of man, becoming the vehicle for the transportation of his thoughts from land to land; in an age when the earth was recognized as the center of all things, and in subordination to which the lamps of heaven were suspended, it is claimed that miracles were wrought.

It is contrary to reason and observation, all things continue as they were from the beginning.

Miracles are an essential element in Christianity. Either the miracles of the Bible are true, or the religion of the Bible is false. The miracles are not to be separated from the religion. They are constitutive portions of it. The supernatural birth and character and resurrection of Christ are miraculous events, the disproof of which is fatal to the whole scheme of Christianity.

But the main strength of modern unbelief is directed precisely against this point—the discrediting of the supernatural element in Scripture, the doing away with all that is miraculous in the person and life of Christ.

And the argument by which this is attempted is exactly the argument Peter foretells. The order of Nature is so regular and unbroken that it raises an insuperable presumption against the truth of miracles, past or future. The fixed and orderly courses of events have not been broken in the memory of man. "Since the fathers fell asleep" no such interpositions in the march of physical law have occurred. You never witnessed a resurrection. It is, therefore, improbable such interpositions ever did occur. And if they never did happen, it is equally unlikely they ever will happen. There never was a supernatural birth; there never will be one. There never was a resurrection from the grave; there never will be one. The order of Nature discredits the statements of Revelation.

The a b c of modern unbelief is of itself a beautiful theory. Philosophy comes with her primary declaration, "There is nothing lost." Matter simply undergoes change. We are now in the midst of harvest time; the July sun beams down upon us laden with heat; the kisses of early frost will clothe the forests in a beautiful wealth of coloring; soon the chill of autumn time will come to be succeeded by greater chill of winter. The laughing, joyous brooklets will then be congealed before the frost-king's might. The face of earth be covered with robes of snow. With the advent of spring-time all nature will bound forth joyously into a new life; rills and rivers, with waters unlocked from their fetters, will roll on to the sea, and thus the eternal sound of the seasons continue. That which lends strength to a human arm to-day, perchance roamed the forest at will but yesterday in form of beast; that which lends brilliancy to a human eye, waved in growth of grain; dread battle-fields where slumber thousands slain have furnished nourishment for the support of thousands of their successors. The earth is, literally, mother of the man. It is a scientific fact that man is made, or is daily being made, of the dust of the earth. You can analyze a man as you can a cup of water; and if you do, you will find him to be so much silex, so much oxygen, so much carbon, so much lime, so much salt, indeed, a bit of gold and a bit of silver, and a scrap of almost every element known. The saint as well as the sinner has a trace of sulphur. So you have man in pieces and you find

nothing but what lies around you—dust. The life-principle, the God-breath that vivifies this composite being, whence are they? Says the scoffer, the result of uncounted ages of dust-revolutions. A development from lower orders of existence. His researches tell him the story of the "origin of species," and of the "survival of the fittest," in strict accord with laws of nature, or rather, the great law of evolution. All living things from a monad have sprung. Lord Neaves poetically reviews the Darwinian theory of how it took a few millions of ages to bring about this development:

"Some creatures grew bulky, while others were small,
As nature sent food for the few or for all;
And the weakest, we know, ever go to the wall:
Which nobody can deny.

A deer with a neck that was longer by half
Than the rest of its family's (try not to laugh),
By stretching and stretching became a giraffe:
Which nobody can deny.

A very tall pig with a very long nose,
Sends forth a probosis quite down to his toes,
And then by the name of an elephant goes:
Which nobody can deny.

An ape with a pliable thumb and big brain,
When the gift of the gab he had managed to gain,
As a Lord of Creation established his reign:
Which nobody can deny."

Change is written upon all things. But its kaleidoscopic panorama is in strict accord with fixed principles or laws of nature. Never since Christianity had an opponent, had it one so formidable. Since the days of David Hume, who first put this argument into a cogent popular form, to the present, it has

been becoming more and more popular. It is one which the whole tendency of popular feeling in reference to physical science predisposes to, and enforces. If the argument is valid at all it sweeps the whole ground. It disposes of the person and history of Christ; for that person and history are of no considerable value unless they be supernatural and divine. It disposes of all our hopes through the Gospel teachings, for those hopes are based upon a regeneration, itself presenting a transformation which Nature has no power to work. It disposes of the predictions of Scripture concerning resurrection, the judgment, the visible kingdom of Christ. For these are not events in the order of Nature. Should they occur, they would be witnesses that all things did not continue as they were from the beginning.

Whether this argument is valid enough to do all this which it proposes to do, is not, however, our endeavor to disprove. The point to which attention is directed is that, whether valid or not, its pretensions were definitely anticipated and foretold. Language more exactly suited to point out the habit of thought of the skeptic of to-day, than the homely, "All things continue as they were," could not have been commanded. It portrays the whole course of disbelief from Hume to Herbert Spencer. Renan's reduction of Jesus to an impostor, Tyndall's ridicule of the efficacy of prayer, Colenso's denial of the Hebrew records, Darwin's Origin of Species, Haeckel's Protoplasm, are all succinctly epitomized and de-

picted in that antique delineation of the nature of the scoffer of the last days.

Lest some might still be in doubt, the prophet Peter further sets forth the platform of the scoffer in these words: "For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water; whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished."

A few years since, on a railway train in Illinois, I heard a gentleman, who lays claim to erudition, declaiming against the idea of the deluge, which destroyed all the human race save that of Noah and his family. "Why," said he, to several young men who listened entranced at his logic, "the first great declaration of Philosophy is that 'nothing is lost.' Matter merely undergoes change of form. There is no more water to-day than there was in the beginning. It exists in form of vapor, of steam, of ice; it sweeps over the land before the winds in form of clouds, it falls in rain-drops, it percolates the earth, bursts forth in springs, but in amount remains the same. Why," said he, "gather it all together from its recesses, precipitate it in the form of rain, and it wouldn't cover the earth's surface to the depth of a single inch. What folly to give credit to the old story of the flood. Place it along side of Joshua's commanding the sun to stand still, or with the mistakes of Moses." The scoffer thus fulfills the prediction made by Peter, as Peter says they are willingly ignorant. Why willingly ignorant? These philoso-

phers well know that water is a compound substance composed of oxygen and hydrogen in proportions 79 to 21 parts respectively. That these elements are everywhere encountered throughout the realms of nature. Oxygen, the life principle, that which vivifies. Hydrogen, an element entering into the composition of almost all forms of organic matter. Eliminate these elements from the rocks, the trees, all forms of animal life, precipitate them in form of rain and this globe of ours would become an aqueous ball, everywhere a watery waste.

The being whom we call God spoke all things into existence. Harmoniously the golden cords were strung upon the harp of existence; the cycles of the ages as they roll their mighty rounds are but perfecting the Master's ideal. The scoffer who would pronounce Nature self-existent, or self-creative, but fulfills the sure word of prophecy.

Brethren, let us pay heed to the apostle's and prophet's admonition, "Ye therefore beloved, seeing ye know these things beforehand, beware lest ye also being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness."

REASONS WHY THE BIBLE WILL RETAIN ITS HOLD ON THOUGHTFUL MINDS.

ALEX. PROCTER.

Our annual meetings in these lectureships are significant of several things. The renewal and enjoyment of old friendship and intellectual fellowship of men of like pursuits and similar tastes, and the extension of these feelings to an ever widening circle is always both grateful and beneficial. But besides this, it means that in the studies required by our work as ministers of the gospel we meet with problems in whose solution we need each other's help. Again it means that by the candid comparison of our thoughts we seek as far as possible to eliminate all error and to obtain the clearest and largest understanding of truth within our reach.

From the nature of the subjects on which we are compelled, almost daily, to think and to speak, there is no other class of men who are so often and so forcibly reminded of the limitation of all our faculties. With finite minds we are constantly compelled to try to grasp the infinite. As the eye of the traveler on his way is able to outline and classify distant objects and, still advancing, sees others undefined always coming into view, so, in our mental vision, if we move at all, as we proceed through the

solution of one problem we discern others unsolved ever rising on the field. Thus it is, as we survey our mental horizon, we are made conscious that we are forever surrounded with mystery.

But one of the essential attributes of the mind, when once awakened into activity, is its deathless desire to know. Mystery, so far from satisfying its longing or discouraging its efforts, only sharpens its hunger and stimulates endeavor. There are laws of thinking as well as of physical action, and one of the first of these requires that the mine shall account to itself, in some way, for whatever it sees. Whether in the condition of deepest ignorance and under darkest superstition, or in that of the latest culture and most complete development of his faculties, man must have some way of explaining the phenomena occurring around him. Let the explanation be simple or complex, let it be a fetish, or a pantheon, or the laws that guide the unseen forces of nature as seen in the full daylight of latest science, an explanation he will have, and to it he will cling until shown another and better. The great races that inhabit this globe have each had their way of looking at the universe. The view each has taken of the world, of God and man, and the relations they mutually sustain to each other, has constituted its religion and its philosophy. To state it differently: What peoples have thought of their gods, and the part those gods have taken in directing the elements of nature in relation to the lives of men, is their philosophy of nature, and the emotions of fear or hope or love,

awakened by those thoughts and expressed in songs or prayers, or other forms of action in their religion. A religion in an ethnical sense, then, is simply the way some particular nation has had of thinking of God and of interpreting the phenomena of nature, including in the term nature, the man himself and the phenomena of his consciousness. The elements and forces of nature were constituted, their action and interaction were planned in precisely that way that would excite to the highest tension the curiosity and wonder of the human mind. Their variety is infinite, and throughout their wide extent they are filled with contradiction. Light and darkness, heat and cold, storm and calm, life and death, seem to wage an endless war with each other. The life of man is like the world of which it forms a part; loving pleasure, he is stung with pain; loving health, he is always menaced and often attacked with disease; loving freedom, he is in bondage to care and toil; believing in life, he is the victim of death. With such an organism man comes into such a world. He looks outward upon a world in conflict with itself and with him, and within at a nature at war with itself and with the world. There is no such thing as retiring from this war and of letting the world go on with its conflict, and of his taking his own way in peace. His life will not go on without bread, and, when he asks for it, he is told in the words spoken to the first man, he must win it in his battle with the elements of nature, and must eat it in the sweat of his face. This relation of man to the

world outside himself has been concisely expressed by the author of Ecce Homo, in these words: "All human activity is a transaction with nature. It is the arrangement of a compromise between what we want on the one hand, and what nature has decreed on the other. Something of our own wishes we have almost always to give up; but by carefully considering the power outside ourselves, the necessity that conditions all our actions, we may make better terms than we could otherwise, and reduce to a minimum what we are obliged to renounce." This carefully considering the power outside ourselves, the study of the phenomena of nature, is unavoidably forced upon human thought. It is true that by the study of the laws and the forces of nature, by taking the advantages which his intelligence gives him, as the Duke of Argyll has it, by playing them off against each other, man has won many great and brilliant triumphs over nature, and is likely to achieve many more, but still he knows they are mightier and vaster than he. To him their power is immeasurable, their order invariable and their march eternal and inexorable. How deeply this contemplation of the invariable order of nature without us has engraved in human thought the great doctrine of necessity, and how the consciousness of the power of volition within has fixed in the heart with equal depth the conviction of its own freedom, all know who have given any attention to history of philosophy.

We all well know, too, that in the course of religious thought, in centuries not long past, some of the

most fiery and bloody tragedies in history have been enacted by the conflict of one of these beliefs with the other. This universal view of the antagonisms of nature, and the deep discords within, of which the experiences of all men have made them conscious, have in all ages and in all stages of civilization made painfully difficult to the thoughts of men their view of God. The questions, whence, and how, and why these things are so, forever and forever rise up in thought, and refuse to be silent. When we look into the forms of life and thought made visible to us in the earliest dawn of history, estimated all the way from twenty-five to thirty-five centuries before the time at which any part of the Bible was written, we see that men had already worked out elaborate explanations of these mysteries of nature. The expanse of the sky, the course of the sun across it; his sinking in darkness at the close of day; his victory over night at the dawn; the winds, the clouds; the invisible power of life-forces, breaking forth from the earth in spring-time; besides many other elements and aspects of nature were already, to their minds, the movements of divinities, directing the government of the world. To all these earliest people, who have left the records of their way of viewing the universe, their thoughts and their beliefs, on stone monuments and on papyrus rolls along the Nile, or written on sun-dried bricks in the plains of the Euphrates and the Tigris. There were gods and spirits to represent both sides of nature and of human life. There were gods to explain the night, the storm, death and the

underworld, as there were those of the dawn, the light and the joyful spring-time. There were gods supernal and gods infernal, gods of the good and those of the evil. The questions, whether in long prehistoric ages the minds of men went from the One to the many, or have traveled from the many to the One, has not been decided. Whether with Rawlinson, while admitting that we "see everywhere in the ancient world polytheism, more or less multitudinous—vast and complicated arrangements of divine beings, endued with different degrees of power, variously related to each other and regarded by their worshipers with different degrees of veneration," we can discern underlying it all "traces of monotheistic beliefs;" or, with the Duke of Argyll, we see in all these paganisms "development in a wrong direction," so that they look "like the remnants of a bed of rocks which had been broken up at a distant epoch of geological time and has left no other record of itself than a few worn and incoherent fragments in some far-off conglomerate;" or whether we see in the mind of man a structure of powers and faculties constituted in the image of God and co-related to the elements of the world in which it is to live and act, capable of recognizing truth and acting according to its own well-known laws, one of which makes the part suggest the whole, the ugly, the beautiful, the effect, the cause, the many, the one; whether, after ages of struggle and the education which baffled effort gives these wonderful powers of thought would grow strong enough to grasp the problem of the unity

of nature and then the unity of God. These are questions for discussions, and their decision must be left to the future. It is not wise to commit beforehand the eternal truths that vindicate the Bible, and on which rests the best and most advanced civilizations in the world to the decision of such questions.

Polytheism, then, is the explanation of nature, and in one degree or another is the religion of all the great races of mankind when they first appear in history. When we turn to the Bible, one great fact, unique, standing out by itself, meets our view. A small tribe of the great Semitic race located in the center of these old civilizations, with their "vast and complicated arrangements of divine beings," had attained the true conception of unity, and found the key to the universe. The announcement of their great prophet sounds like the blast of a trumpet from the heavens. "Hear O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord." If we could realize in thought a living picture of the chief gods of all those great nations, all with their female consorts and their innumerable subordinates, we might form some appreciation of this sunlit conception of the Hebrew mind. One infinite creator, whose will is the cause of all worlds and all beings, whose character is an assemblage of moral perfections; wisdom and righteousness, truth and holiness. These constitute the glory of his power and the majesty of his personality. The Hebrew conception of the government of God is equally simple and sublime. The world at the very beginning is endowed by Jehovah with the infinite possibilities of both the

good and the evil. That good will be obtained by him who reverently obeys the sovereign will of Him who rules in righteousness; and the evil be incurred by him who breaks His statutes, His commandments and judgments. Looked at in contrast with the best types of manhood yet discovered in the remains of all ancient nations, the Hebrew conception of man is, if possible, still more wonderful; with his transcendent ideal of the character of God in his mind, man is a copy of that. "So God created man in his own image; in the image of God so created he him." In the Hebrew Scriptures truth is to be accepted on account of its own infinite worth, and the value attached to moral virtue is everywhere supreme. We hear much about seeking truth for its own sake, and of virtue being its own reward. This is exactly the old Hebrew ideal of life. No reward is offered for obedience except such as comes to a good man under the government of a righteous God, and the penalties threatened are such as everywhere fall upon men and nations in wrong-doing and wickedness. This is a short and simple creed, but the sublime hight of its conceptions of God, of his moral government over the world, of the dignity of man's nature and of his greatness in right-doing has never been transcended. On the same exalted level stands the Hebrew idea of worship. From such a being as man is conceived to be to Jehovah as known by their great lawgiver, no offering unworthy of either is ever allowed to be made. Memphis and Thebes, Babylon and Nineveh were full of images to the sun and moon and stars of

heaven; images of the bodily form of man, of beasts of the earth, birds of the air, and fishes in the waters beneath. The first chapter of Genesis, before it becomes the first commandment of Decalogue, points above all created things to the Creator as alone worthy of the worship due from man.

Now, we have seen that the phenomena of nature as viewed by those old polytheists were explained by their conception of the gods and demons, and sometimes swarms of evil spirits that they supposed connected with them. So, to the Hebrew mind, God was directly present in every phenomenon. While his knowledge of the one living and true God gave him the right clew to the great temple of nature, and saved him from the follies and falsehoods to which the clew of others led them, it did not open to him the doors of the temple and show him its secrets and its treasures. The laws which explain to us the action of the invisible forces of nature were unknown to him. The intimations in the Old Testament of a knowledge of what we sometimes call secondary causes, are few and obscure. When a storm-cloud was gathering in the west over the Mediterranean, and the thunder-peal reached his ear, his explanation was, "The voice of the Lord is upon the waters, the God of glory thundereth." When the winds fell upon the face of the deep and lifted up its waves, it is "The voice of the Lord is upon the great waters." When the approaching tempest made the earth to tremble beneath him, it is "The voice of the Lord is powerful, the voice of the Lord is full of majesty." When

the storm passed from the sea to the sides of the mountains and is heard crashing in the forests, it is "The voice of the Lord breaketh the cedars of Lebanon: yea, the Lord breaketh the cedars." When the forked lightning flashed across the sky, he says: "The voice of the Lord divideth the flames of fire." This is only one illustration, not by any means the best, out of hundreds that could be selected almost anywhere in the history, the poetry or philosophy contained in the books of the Old Testament, of his way of explaining to himself the phenomena of nature. If it is said this is all poetry, the answer is: Poetry was his normal way of thinking. Poetry was more realistic to him than prose can ever be to us. Knowledge of the physical world at the time when the earliest books of the Bible were written was very limited. The degree of knowledge with all its limitations possessed by the writers of these books passed into the literature of the nation in the same way as has occurred among all other peoples. Science has abundantly shown that the view of nature reflected from the Bible is incomplete, but it has shown that its theory of the universe is false. Science has grandly pressed its way along the chain of natural causation, and has brought to view many of its shining links, but that was only to show that the chain was longer than the Hebrew knew. To show that his view was false, it would have to be proved that God is not at the other end of it.

This is true of the Hebrew view of the universe as a whole; of those great central truths in which seers

and prophets recognized the unity of nature ; in which they saw one will its sole cause ; one wisdom its vast plan ; one supreme code its soverign law and aim. In their view of the world in detail, in accounting for the ordinary experiences of life, in the absence of any true knowledge of scientific causes, the limitations of their knowledge are everywhere apparent. In the long exile in Babylon, Media and Persia, their modes of thought were moulded by the opinions and beliefs of the peoples among whom they lived. The side of life on which they found its happy experiences was filled with angels, while in their diseases and sufferings they saw the agency of demons. The angelology of later Jewish history and the demonology of the New Testament will be found, I must think, to be a mode of thought, a way of accounting for phenomena for which, in that age, no other explanation could be given. Where the old polytheists saw gods of good and evil, and the Jews, angels and demons, we see scientific causes.

Historical criticism may show that the records we have in the Bible are fragmentary, that in their collection there may have been displacements and misarrangement of books and of parts of books, that there are many errors in its chronology ; it may even show that a writer here and there, in giving his deeper or higher conception of God and his dealings with men, has drawn on some old poetic tradition, found floating down the ages in the literature of the world, but should these discoveries, and many others be made, they will only serve as a background to bring

more clearly into view those eternal truths, in whose light the harmony of the universe has become visible to the eyes and minds of men, and from whose chords, thrilling in the hearts of inspired bards, has flowed the grandest and sweetest song of the centuries.

But we have been glancing mainly at the problems offered to the eyes and the minds of men in the world outside ourselves. When we come to look within, we are met with a set of contradictions so closely allied to our own being and so full of awe, that, like the book in the right hand of him that sat on the throne, seen in the Apocalypse, "No man in heaven, nor in the earth, neither under the earth was able to open the book nor to look thereon." And humanity, like the seer, could only "weep much because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon." In this book of human consciousness are found pictures of temptation and resistance, of home and exile, of innocence and guilt, of happiness and wretchedness, of hope and despair, of life and death, painted in colors of sharp contrast on all its living pages. The life of every man begins like that of the first man in Genesis, in the Garden of Eden. Here we are at home, the harmony of nature is still unbroken; love and peace are in the sky; joy and gladness are on the earth; God is near; Heaven lies about us in our infancy; the glad waters of the river of life flow on before us forever. But, sin comes, and our eyes are opened; self-consciousness begins; storm and cloud have

driven the light from heaven; the serpent is among the flowers at our feet; soon we are without the gate and a flaming sword hangs forever between us and that home of peace. In the memory of us all there has been sacredly kept a picture like this. Whether under the noon or the setting sun of our years, we love to look back to the horizon on which the star of our life arose. The quiet charm of the early dawn still lingers in its morning sky, where a mother's love and a father's smile shone above us like a blessed light; when innocence in the heart made all the world a dream of peaceful beauty. The sin that drives us from that paradise, and the consciousness that we can never return to it again, is there too. This to every one is the origin of the knowledge of good and evil, that awful dualism that has been the nightmare of human nature in all the ages. The Hebrew conception of God and his high and pure ideal of duty and of life, while it unified his view of the world without could not remove the contradictions within.

His lawgiver, when he made the great announcement, "the Lord our God is one," had added, "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might." He could believe in God as the creator and ruler of men, he could believe in duty as the sovereign law of his being, but his view of Jehovah and of the law which expresses His infinite sovereignty, will never put into his heart the power to obey that law. He could see that there were light and joy in his home,

he could know from the gifts brought to him from nature and from the organized society about him, as he walked in the line of duty, that there was a providence over his life. If this convinced him of the love of God towards him, he could see, also, that in this world there is as much darkness as light, as much pain as pleasure, as much sorrow as joy, as much death as life, as much evil as good, that somehow all good is mixed with evil and all evil with good. If, therefore, there was reason to see, in the one class of experiences, the presence of the love and goodness of God to his children, there was the same reason to see, in the other, the want of it. Following the Hebrew prophet men could believe in the love of God to a certain extent, but beyond that faith was chilled and paralyzed by its view of evil and could go no further. Another prophet was needed, one who could show the place where all contradictions meet and are reconciled, one who could take away forever the painful sense of discord that all other prophets and teachers have failed to remove and satisfy that deep longing for unity in the souls of men that have made "the whole creation travail and groan together in pain until now." We needed, and "we have found him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of Joseph." "He came down from heaven," and therefore could say, "we speak that we do know." He could actually "show us the Father," and make us see that the Father loves his children with his whole infinite nature, as he has asked them

to love him with all their heart, and with all their soul, and with all their might. He said God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son, and by his whole life in the world, his death on the cross, and his departure from it, showed us how a Son of God loves. He put it in our power to become sons of God, too, and giving us the spirit of sons, made it possible for us to live on this earth the life commanded in the Hebrew Bible as a solemn and stern duty, as a voluntary offering, even as a passionate inspiration.

When the universe is looked at through this light, taking into his view all its possibilities of both the evil and the good, an inspired son of God can say, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God,"—"For I am persuaded, that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." All the sons of God can say this now. As the old Hebrew prophet placed in the hands of men the key to the problem of nature and the world without, so our divine prophet was found worthy to open the book of humanity, to loose all the seals thereof, and to be himself its solution.

Our religion is also a way of viewing the universe. In the light of the Lamb of God, we see through it all the face of "our Father in heaven," we know he has an eternal home for his children, and will surely

bring them to the garden and the river again.

While men can see in the universe a vast plan, an order, the view of which is widening every day, while they know that behind plan and order is wisdom, while they believe in the supremacy of mind over matter, and the sovereignty of moral right over all, the Hebrew Bible that first distinctly announced these principles to the world, and made them the solid ground of life and worship must hold its place in the reverence and the faith of men.

While men can see that all life and all happiness are born of love, as when the sun in the spring-time wraps the earth in his warmth, and life responds to his embrace, as behind all the forms of even animal life, and the joys it knows and the songs it sings is love, so is the infinite love of God, only revealed to the world in its fulness in the Christ, will be seen the cause and the reason of our faith in the life eternal.

Let us place the Bible, as we do all other books, on its own real merits. It will have a perfect title to the crown it wears as long as it sways the world with the scepter of truth. God has constituted mind capable of knowing, after a long enough trial, what will make men better, and we know now that for more than thirty centuries the civilizations and forms of life that have grown from the seed-truths carried in these books are the highest and purest that have appeared on this planet.

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